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SIR WALTER SCOTT.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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STEREOTYPED BY J. HOWE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In presenting to the public the Autobiography of a man, so distinguished as Sir Walter Scott, it is proper that they should be made acquainted with the sources from which it is derived. However those who delight in mystery, may have regretted the avowal of the author of the Waverley Novels, which deprived them and critics of a fruitful source for conjecture and speculation, the consequences are such as to have afforded much unexpected pleasure to the lovers of literary history and anecdote.

As the avowal was shortly followed by a new edition of the works in question, it was natural that explanations should be made of many circumstances arising from the previous concealment; and, at the same time, as the extraordinary interest evinced in regard to them, had led to allusions to historical incidents, and even local and domestic occurrences, supposed to be connected with them, it seemed in a great degree proper, that the author should, at least in some instances, affirm or deny their correctness.

This was accordingly done by Sir Walter Scott. In repeating the reasons for his long secrecy, as to the authorship, he was induced to relate many of the events of his literary life; and in explaining the foundations of his delightful tales, he opened

new views of his peculiar studies, as well as of his individual character. Having, about the same time, undertaken to publish a new edition of his poetical works, he prepared introductory notices, embracing, when taken together, a similar account of another portion of his life—that in which he delighted the world with poems placing him, only less elevated among the votaries of the muse, than he is among those who have been most admirable in the composition of what is more usually termed romance.

On reading over these notices, which, under the modest names of introductions, prefaces, and notes, abound in biographical sketches of himself, and of various persons with whom he was associated, in amusing anecdotes, in literary disquisitions, and in all the marks of a benevolent spirit, as well as an admirable genius; it was apparent that they embraced a history of a large portion of his life, told by himself; and that, if collected from the volumes in which they are originally inserted, they would form, with no alteration whatever, except of occasional words, an Autobiography full at once of instruction and amusement.

This has been done in the following pages. Scrupulous care has been used in putting the fragments together; but they will be found to fall in with one another so naturally as to preserve everywhere a continuous narrative, and to supply a complete history of the life of a man, identified with the age in which he lives, and which he has so much contributed to improve and adorn.

Perhaps it has never happened to an individual

to enjoy more of the enviable tranquillity of life, blended, at the same time, with great and well-earned reputation. To obtain the rewards of ambition, most men have to pass through various struggles, to encounter various difficulties, and if those which surround the path of a man of letters are apparently less numerous, or less painful, it has been too surely proved that they are, in truth, such as wrack the mind, and often bury all the energies of intellect. With Sir Walter Scott, however, this has not been the case, so far as we can ascertain; and though something may be hidden from the world, undoubtedly his career is one which the philosophic as well as the aspiring may justly envy.

If this were owing merely to the accidents of fortune, it would be scarcely worthy of remark; but it is to be attributed far less to these, than to a native amiableness of character, and to a uniform equanimity which he has struggled to preserve in every situation. It is to be attributed also to a steady pursuit of those objects which he determined in the outset to make the business of his life; to an anxious care in avoiding useless controversies into which men, frequently before the public, and especially literary men, are apt to plunge themselves; and to a just and modest consciousness, that, as a member of society, there were duties to be performed, and relations to be maintained, from which no elevation of genius could release him.

These things make the history of Sir Walter Scott's life, interesting and important, far beyond the mere interest and importance attached to the

biography of a man distinguished in his day. The incidents that happen to those who become famous by great events of the times, or by the sway of their unbridled passions, are indeed looked upon with curiosity, but they are seldom applied as lessons. Those which attend a life, more like that of common mortals, instruct while they amuse; and though we may feel our inferiority in regard to genius, we trace and desire to emulate those points of character and conduct, without which that genius would have been comparatively useless, and which are found to add to it many of its charms.

There is too a feeling of gratitude towards Sir Walter Scott, which must rise in the breasts of all who can look back for a few years. How much real happiness—how many hours of delightful amusement, unalloyed with the excitement of a single ungenerous or immoral feeling, do we owe to the writings of this man! Year after year he has been throwing off the exuberant creations of his intellect; year after year he has been painting, for our eyes, the richest scenes of nature, and giving a classic character to a thousand spots; year after year he has been depicting for us, in colors more vivid, and which will endure far longer than those of annals, the characters of men who have adorned the brightest pages of history, and events which are united with the glory and the enterprise of many ages and nations. Beyond this, he has offered to us illustrations, never to be obliterated, of human character, preserving always the picture of those qualities which elevate our race. Who shall refuse the meed of admiration to the man who

has described the simple virtues of Jeannie Deans, the matchless perfection of Rebecca, and those innumerable traits of female beauty, excellence and truth, which are fresh in the mind of every reader, but which, however pleasant, we can here scarcely be permitted to recall? Is there a reader who can even yet peruse with tearless eyes the mournful but exquisite tragedy of Lammermoor, or the more splendid, but not less touching, story of Amie Robsart? Is there one who has forgotten the scenes of inimitable humor, unmixed with a word he would desire to blot, which fill every volume from the Baron of Bradwardine to Sir Dugald Dalgetty and Poor Peter Peebles? Is there one who does not find his recollection and his heart lingering among those domestic scenes where are exhibited all the truth, the homeliness, the beauty, and the goodness of classes of society, not the less noble, if the less refined? Or tracing still farther back the sketches of the same pencil, do we not yet love to turn to the wild romantic beauties of Loch Katrine, to follow Marmion to the castle, the court and the fatal field? Yes! to no age are the writings of this man without their charm—to no character imbued with sympathy for the misfortunes, or with delight in the innocent pleasures, the amusing humors, or the eventful fortunes of his fellow-creatures.

During the years, and we trust they may be many, which he is yet to enjoy, all will hope that the story of his life is to be recorded with more minute delineation, than is sketched in the pages that follow; but these, imperfect as they are,

present a narrative in which all who have derived pleasure from the writings, will find much to make them admire the author; and those who aspire, though at a distance, to similar fame, will discover at once lessons to direct, and motives to incite their efforts.

PHILADELPHIA, *September* 20, 1831.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

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In giving an account of the compositions he has offered to the public, the author feels that he has the delicate task of speaking more of himself and his personal concerns, than may perhaps be either graceful or prudent. In this particular, he runs the risk of presenting himself to the public in the relation that the dumb wife in the jest-book held to her husband, when, having spent half of his fortune to obtain the cure of her imperfection, he was willing to have bestowed the other half to restore her to her former condition. But this is a risk inseparable from the task which the author has undertaken, and he can only promise to be as little of an egotist as the situation will permit. It is perhaps an indifferent sign of a disposition to keep his word, that having introduced himself in the third person singular, he proceeds in the second paragraph to make use of the first. But it appears to him that the seeming modesty connected with the former mode of writing, is overbalanced by the inconvenience of stiffness and affectation which attends it during a narrative of some length, and which may be observed less or more in every work in which the third person is used, from the Commentaries of Cæsar, to the Autobiography of Alexander the Corrector.

'I must refer to a very early period of my life, were I to point out my first achievements as a tale-teller—but I believe some of my old school-fellows can still bear witness that I had a distinguished character for that talent, at a time when the applause of my companions was my recompense for the disgraces and punishments which the future romance-writer incurred for being idle himself, and keeping others idle, during

hours that should have been employed on our tasks. The chief enjoyment of my holydays was to escape with a chosen friend, who had the same taste with myself, and alternately to recite to each other such wild adventures as we were able to devise. We told, each in turn, interminable tales of knight-errantry and battles and enchantments, which were continued from one day to another as opportunity offered, without our ever thinking of bringing them to a conclusion. As we observed a strict secrecy on the subject of this intercourse, it acquired all the character of a concealed pleasure, and we used to select, for the scenes of our indulgence, long walks through the solitary and romantic environs of Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, Braid Hills, and similar places in the vicinity of Edinburgh; and the recollection of those holydays still forms an *oasis* in the pilgrimage which I have to look back upon. I have only to add that my friend still lives, a prosperous gentleman, but too much occupied with graver business, to thank me for indicating him more plainly as a confidant of my childish mystery.

When boyhood advancing into youth required more serious studies and graver cares, a long illness threw me back on the kingdom of fiction, as if it were by a species of fatality. My indisposition arose, in part at least, from my having broken a blood-vessel; and motion and speech were for a long time pronounced positively dangerous. For several weeks I was confined strictly to my bed, during which time I was not allowed to speak above a whisper, to eat more than a spoonful or two of boiled rice, or to have more covering than one thin counterpane. When the reader is informed that I was at this time a growing youth, with the spirits, appetite, and impatience of fifteen, and suffered, of course, greatly under this severe regimen, which the repeated return of my disorder rendered indispensable, he will not be surprised that I was abandoned to my own discretion, so far as reading (my almost sole amusement) was concerned, and still less so, that I abused the indulgence which left my time so much at my own disposal.

'There was at this time a circulating library in Edinburgh, founded, I believe, by the celebrated Allan Ramsay, which, besides containing a most respectable collection of books of every description, was, as might have been expected, peculiarly rich in works of fiction. It exhibited specimens of every kind, from the romances of chivalry, and the ponderous folios of Cyrus and Cassandra, down to the most approved works of later times. I was plunged into this great ocean of reading without compass or pilot; and unless when some one had the charity to play at chess with me, I was allowed to do nothing save read, from morning to night. I was, in kindness and pity, which was perhaps erroneous, however natural, permitted to select my subjects of study at my own pleasure, upon the same principle that the humors of children are indulged to keep them out of mischief. As my taste and appetite were gratified in nothing else, I indemnified myself by becoming a glutton of books. Accordingly, I believe I read almost all the romances, old plays, and epic poetry, in that formidable collection, and no doubt was unconsciously amassing materials for the task in which it has been my lot to be so much employed.

'At the same time, I did not in all respects abuse the license permitted me. Familiar acquaintance with the specious miracles of fiction brought with it some degree of satiety, and I began by degrees to seek in histories, memoirs, voyages and travels, and the like, events nearly as wonderful as those which were the work of imagination, with the additional advantage that they were at least in a great measure true. The lapse of nearly two years, during which I was left to the exercise of my own free will, was followed by a temporary residence in the country; where I was again very lonely, but for the amusement which I derived from a good though old-fashioned library. The vague and wild use which I made of this advantage, I cannot describe better than by referring my reader to the desultory studies of Waverley in a similar situation; the passages concerning whose course of reading were

imitated from recollections of my own.—It must be understood that the resemblance extends no farther.

Time, as it glided on, brought the blessings of confirmed health and personal strength, to a degree which had never been expected or hoped for. The severe studies necessary to render me fit for my profession, occupied the greater part of my time; and the society of my friends and companions, who were about to enter life along with me, filled up the interval, with the usual amusements of young men. I was in a situation which renders serious labour indispensable; for neither possessing, on the one hand, any of those peculiar advantages which are supposed to favor a hasty advance in the profession of the law, nor being on the other hand exposed to unusual obstacles to interrupt my progress, I might reasonably expect to succeed according to the greater or less degree of trouble which I should take to qualify myself as a pleader.

A period, when a particular taste for the ancient ballad melody, and for the closer or more distant imitation of that strain of poetry, became the fashion in a most extravagant degree,* was the occasion, unexpectedly indeed, of my deserting the profession to which I was educated; and the success of a few ballads had the effect of changing all the purpose and tenor of my life, and converting me, after I was a pains-taking lawyer of a few years' standing, into a follower of literature. In mentioning this circumstance, I will endeavor to do so with becoming brevity, and without more egotism than is positively exacted by the nature of the story.

I may, in the first place, remark, that although the assertion has been made, and that by persons who seemed satisfied with their authority, it is a mistake to suppose that my situation in life or place in society were materially altered by such success as I attained in literary attempts. My birth, without giving the least pretension to distinction, was that of a gentleman, and connected me with several respectable fami-

* See No. I of the Appendix.

lies and accomplished persons. My education had been a good one, although I was deprived of its full benefit by indifferent health, just at the period when I ought to have been most sedulous in improving it. The young men with whom I was brought up, and lived most familiarly, were those, who, from opportunities, birth, and talents, might be expected to make the greatest advances in the profession to which we were all destined; and I have the pleasure still to preserve my youthful intimacy with no inconsiderable number of them, whom their merit has carried forward to the highest honors of their profession. Neither was I in a situation to be embarrassed by the *res angusta domi*, which might have otherwise interrupted my progress in a profession in which progress is proverbially slow. I enjoyed a moderate degree of business for my standing, and the friendship of more than one person of consideration efficiently disposed to aid my views in life. The private fortune, also, which I might expect, and finally inherited, from my family, did not, indeed, amount to affluence, but placed me considerably beyond all apprehension of want. I mention these particulars merely because they are true. Many better men than myself have owed their rise from indigence and obscurity to their own talents, which were, doubtless, much more adequate to the task of raising them than any which I possess. Although it would be absurd and ungracious in me to deny, that I owe to literature many marks of distinction to which I could not otherwise have aspired, and particularly that of securing the acquaintance, and even the friendship, of many remarkable persons of the age, to whom I might not otherwise have made my way; it would, on the other hand, be ridiculous to affect gratitude to the public favor, either for my position in society, or the means of supporting it with decency, matters which had been otherwise secured under the usual chances of human affairs. Thus much I have thought it necessary to say upon a subject, which is, after all, of very little consequence to any one but myself. I proceed to detail

the circumstances which engaged me in literary pursuits.

During the last ten years of the eighteenth century, the art of poetry was at a remarkably low ebb in Britain. Hayley, to whom fashion had some years before ascribed a higher degree of reputation than posterity has confirmed, had now lost his reputation for talent, though he still lived, admired and respected as an amiable and accomplished man. The Bard of Memory slumbered on his laurels, and He of Hope had scarce begun to attract his share of public attention. Cowper, a poet of deep feeling and bright genius, was dead, and, even while alive, the hypochondria, which was his mental malady, impeded his popularity. Burns, whose genius our southern neighbors could hardly yet comprehend, had long confined himself to song-writing. Names which are now known and distinguished wherever the English language is spoken, were then only beginning to be mentioned; and, unless among the small number of persons who habitually devote a part of their leisure to literature, those of Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, were but little known. The realms of Parnassus, like many a kingdom at the period, seemed to lie open to the first bold invader, whether he should be a daring usurper, or could show a legitimate title of sovereignty.

As far back as 1788, a new species of literature began to be introduced into this country. Germany, long known as a powerful branch of the European confederacy, was then, for the first time, heard of as the cradle of a style of poetry and literature, of a kind much more analogous to that of Britain than either the French, Spanish, or Italian schools, though all three had been at various times cultivated and imitated among us. The names of Lessing, Klopstock, Schiller, and other poets of eminence, were only known in Britain very imperfectly. "The Sorrows of Werter" was the only composition that had attained any degree of popularity, and the success of that remarkable novel, notwithstanding the distinguished genius of the author, was retarded by the style of the subject.

To the other compositions of Goethé, whose talents were destined to illuminate the age in which he flourished, the English remained strangers, and as much so to Schiller, Bürger, and a whole cycle of foreigners of distinguished merit. The obscurity to which German literature seemed to be condemned, did not arise from want of brilliancy in the lights by which it was illuminated, but from the palpable thickness of the darkness by which they were surrounded. Frederick II. of Prussia had given a partial and ungracious testimony against his native language and native literature, and impolitically and unwisely, as well as untruly, had yielded to the French that superiority in letters, which, after his death, paved the way for their obtaining, for a time, an equal superiority in arms. That great prince, by setting the example of undervaluing his country in one respect, raised a belief in its general inferiority, and destroyed the manly pride with which a nation is naturally disposed to regard its own peculiar manners and peculiar literature.

Unmoved by the scornful neglect of its sovereigns and nobles, and encouraged by the tide of native genius, which flowed in upon the nation, German literature began to assume a new, interesting, and highly impressive character, to which it became impossible for strangers to shut their eyes. That it exhibited the faults of exaggeration and false taste, almost inseparable from the first attempts at the heroic and at the pathetic, cannot be denied. It was, in a word, the first crop of a rich soil, which throws out weeds as well as flowers with a prolific abundance.

It was so late as the 21st day of April, 1788, that the literary persons of Edinburgh, of whom, at that period, I am better qualified to speak than those of Britain generally, or especially those of London, were first made aware of the existence of works of genius in a language cognate with the English, and possessed of the same manly force of expression. They learned, at the same time, that the taste which dictated the German compositions was of a kind as nearly allied to the English as their language. Those who were

customed from their youth to admire Milton and Shakspeare, became acquainted, I may say for the first time, with the existence of a race of poets who had the same lofty ambition to spurn the flaming boundaries of the universe, and investigate the realms of chaos and old night; and of dramatists, who, disclaiming the pedantry of the unities, sought, at the expense of occasional improbabilities and extravagancies, to present life on the stage in its scenes of wildest contrast, and in all its boundless variety of character, mingling, without hesitation, the livelier and the more serious incidents of life, and exchanging scenes of tragic distress, as they occur in common life, with those of a comic tendency. This emancipation from the rules so servilely adhered to by the French school of poetry, and particularly by their dramatic poets, although it was attended with some disadvantages, especially the risk of extravagance and bombast, was the means of giving free scope to the genius of Goethé, Schiller, and others, which, thus relieved from shackles, was not long in soaring to the highest pitch of poetic sublimity. The venerable Henry MacKenzie, author of "The Man of Feeling," in an Essay upon the German Theatre, introduced his countrymen to this new species of national literature, the peculiarities of which he traced with equal truth and spirit, although they were at that time known to him only through the imperfect and uncongenial medium of a French translation. Upon the day already mentioned, (21st April, 1788,) he read to the Royal Society an Essay on German literature, which made much noise, and produced a powerful effect. "Germany," he observed, "in her literary aspect, presents herself to observation in a singular point of view; that of a country arrived at maturity, along with the neighboring nations, in the arts and sciences, in the pleasures and refinements of manners, and yet only in its infancy with regard to writings of taste and imagination. This last path, however, from these very circumstances, she pursues with an enthusiasm which no other situation could perhaps have produced, the enthusiasm which novelty inspires,

and which the servility incident to a more cultivated and critical state of literature does not restrain." At the same time, the accomplished critic showed himself equally familiar with the classical rules of the French stage, and failed not to touch upon the acknowledged advantages which these produced, by the encouragement and regulation of taste, though at the risk of repressing genius.

But it was not the dramatic literature alone of the Germans which was hitherto unknown to their neighbors—their fictitious narratives, their ballad poetry, and other branches of their literature, which are particularly apt to bear the stamp of the extravagant and the supernatural, began to occupy the attention of the British literati.

In Edinburgh, where the remarkable coincidence between the German language and that of the Lowland Scottish, encouraged young men to approach this newly-discovered spring of literature, a class was formed, of six or seven intimate friends, who proposed to make themselves acquainted with the German language. They were in the habit of living much together, and the time they spent in this new study was felt as a period of great amusement. One source of this diversion was the laziness of one of their number, the present author, who, averse to the necessary toil of grammar and its rules, was in the practice of fighting his way to the knowledge of the German by his acquaintance with the Scottish and Anglo-Saxon dialects, and, of course, frequently committed blunders which were not lost on his more accurate and more studious companions. A more general source of amusement, was the despair of the teacher, on finding it impossible to extract from his Scottish students the degree of sensibility necessary, as he thought, to enjoy the beauties of the author to whom he considered it proper first to introduce them. We were desirous to penetrate at once into the recesses of the Teutonic literature, and were ambitious of perusing Goethé and Schiller, and others whose fame had been sounded by

Mac-Kenzie. Dr. Willich, (a medical gentleman,) who was our teacher, was judiciously disposed to commence our studies with the more simple diction of Gesner, and prescribed to us "The Death of Abel," as the production from which our German tasks were to be drawn. The pietistic style of this author was ill adapted to attract young persons of our age and disposition. We could no more sympathize with the overstrained sentimentality of Adam and his family, than we could have had a fellow-feeling with the jolly Faun of the same author, who broke his beautiful jug, and then made a song on it which might have affected all Staffordshire. To sum up the distresses of Dr. Willich, we, with one consent, voted Abel an insufferable bore, and gave the pre-eminence, in point of masculine character, to his brother Cain, or even to Lucifer himself. When these jests, which arose out of the sickly monotony and affected ecstacies of the poet, failed to amuse us, we had for our entertainment the unutterable sounds manufactured by a Frenchman, our fellow-student, who, with the economical purpose of learning two languages at once, was endeavoring to acquire German, of which he knew nothing, by means of English, concerning which he was nearly as ignorant. Heaven only knows the notes which he uttered, in attempting, with unpractised organs, to imitate the gutturals of these two intractable languages. At length, in the midst of much laughing and little study, most of us acquired some knowledge, more or less extensive, of the German language, and selected for ourselves, some in the philosophy of Kant, some in the more animated works of the German dramatists, specimens more to our taste than "The Death of Abel."

About this period, or a year or two sooner, the accomplished and excellent Lord Woodhouselee, one of the friends of my youth, made a spirited version of "The Robbers" of Schiller, which I believe was the first published, though an English version appeared soon afterwards in London, as the metropolis then took the lead in every thing like literary adventure. The

enthusiasm with which this work was received, greatly increased the general taste for German compositions.

While universal curiosity was thus distinguishing the advancing taste for the German language and literature, the success of a very young student, in a juvenile publication, seemed to show that the prevailing taste in that country might be easily employed as a formidable auxiliary to renewing the spirit of our own, upon the same system as when medical persons attempt, by the transfusion of blood, to pass into the veins of an aged and exhausted patient, the vivacity of the circulation and liveliness of sensation which distinguish a young subject. The person who first attempted to introduce something like the German taste into English fictitious dramatic and poetical composition, although his works, when first published, engaged general attention, is now comparatively forgotten. I mean Matthew Gregory Lewis, whose character and literary history are so immediately connected with the subject of which I am treating, that a few authentic particulars may be here inserted by one to whom he was well known.

Lewis's rank in society was determined by his birth, which, at the same time, assured his fortune. His father was Under-Secretary at War, at that time a very lucrative appointment, and the young poet was provided with a seat in Parliament as soon as his age permitted him to fill it. But his mind did not incline him to politics, or, if it did, they were not of the complexion which his father, attached to Mr. Pitt's administration, would have approved. He was, moreover, indolent, and though possessed of abilities sufficient to conquer any difficulty which might stand in the way of classical attainments, he preferred applying his exertions in a path where they were rewarded with more immediate applause. As he completed his education abroad, he had an opportunity of indulging his inclination for the extraordinary and supernatural, by wandering through the whole enchanted land of German faery and romance, not forgetting the paths of her enthusiastic tragedy and romantic poetry.

We are easily induced to imitate what we admire, and Lewis early distinguished himself by a romance in the German taste, called "The Monk." In this work, written in his twentieth year, and founded on the eastern apologue of the Santon Barsisa, the author introduced supernatural machinery with a courageous consciousness of his own power to manage its ponderous strength, which commanded the respect of his reader. "The Monk" was published in 1795, and, though liable to the objections common to the school to which it belonged, and to others peculiar to itself, placed its author at once high in the scale of men of letters. Nor can that be regarded as an ordinary exertion of genius, to which Charles Fox paid the unusual compliment of crossing the House of Commons that he might congratulate the young author, whose work obtained high praise from many other able men of that able time. The party which approved "The Monk" was at first superior in the lists, and it was some time before the anonymous author of the "Pursuits of Literature" denounced as puerile and absurd the supernatural machinery which Lewis had introduced—

"——I bear an English heart,
Unused at ghosts or rattling bones to start."

Yet the acute and learned critic betrays some inconsistency in praising the magic of the Italian poets, and complimenting Mrs. Radcliffe for her success in supernatural imagery, while at the same moment he so sternly censures her brother novelist.

A more legitimate topic of condemnation was the indelicacy of particular passages. The present author will hardly be deemed a willing, or at least an interested apologist for an offence equally repugnant to decency and good-breeding. But as Lewis at once, and with a good grace, submitted to the voice of censure, and expunged the objectionable passages, he cannot help considering the manner in which the fault was insisted on, after all the amends had been offered of which the case could admit, as in the last degree ungenerous and uncandid. The pertinacity with which the passages so much found fault with were dwelt

upon, seemed to warrant a belief that something more was desired than the correction of the author's errors; and that, where the apologies of extreme youth, foreign education, and instant submission, were unable to satisfy the critics' fury, they must have been determined to act on the severity of the old proverb, "Confess, and be hanged." Certain it is, that other persons, offenders in the same degree, have been permitted to sue out their pardon without either retraction or palinode.*

Another peccadillo of the author of "The Monk," was his having borrowed from Musæus, and from the popular tales of the Germans, the singular and striking adventure of the "Bleeding Nun." But the bold and free hand with which he traced some scenes, as well of natural terror as of that which arises from supernatural causes, shows distinctly that the plagiarism could not have been occasioned by any deficiency of invention on his part, though it might take place from wantonness or wilfulness.

In spite of the objections I have stated, "The Monk" was so highly popular, that it seemed to create an epoch in our literature. But the public were chiefly captivated by the poetry with which Mr. Lewis had interspersed his prose narrative. It has now passed from recollection among the changes of literary taste; but many may remember, as well as I do, the effect produced by the simple and beautiful ballad of "Durandarte," which had the good fortune to be adapted to an air of great beauty and pathos; by the ghost ballad of "Alonzo and Imogine," and by several other beautiful pieces of legendary poetry, which addressed themselves in all the charms of novelty and of simplicity to a public who had for a long time been unused to any regale of the kind. In his poetry as well as his prose, Mr. Lewis had been a successful imitator of the Germans, both in his attachment to the ancient ballad, and in the tone of superstition which they willingly mingle with it. New arrangements of the

* In justice to a departed friend, I have subjoined his own defence against an accusation so remorsely persisted in. See No. II. of Appendix, in an extract of a letter to his father.

stanza, and a varied construction of verses, were also adopted, and welcomed as an addition of a new string to the British harp. In this respect, the stanza in which "Alonzo the Brave" is written, was greatly admired, and received as an improvement worthy of adoption into English poetry.

In short, his works were admired, and the author became famous, not merely through his own merit, though that was of no mean quality, but because he had in some measure taken the public by surprise, by using a style of composition, which, like national melodies, is so congenial to the general taste, that though it palls by being much hackneyed, it has only to be for a short time forgotten in order to recover its original popularity.

It chanced that, while his fame was at the highest, Mr. Lewis became almost a yearly visitor to Scotland, chiefly from attachment to the illustrious family of Argyle. The writer of this had the advantage of being made known to the most distinguished author of the day, by a lady who belongs by birth to that family, and is equally distinguished by her beauty and accomplishments. Out of this accidental acquaintance, which increased into a sort of intimacy, consequences arose which altered almost all the Scottish ballad-maker's future prospects in life.

In early youth I had been an eager student of Ballad Poetry, and the tree is still in my recollection, beneath which I lay and first entered upon the enchanting perusal of Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry," although it has long perished in the general blight which affected the whole race of Oriental platanus to which it belonged. The taste of another person had strongly encouraged my own researches into this species of legendary lore. But I had never dreamed of an attempt to imitate what gave me so much pleasure.

I had, indeed, tried the metrical translations which were occasionally recommended to us at the High School. I got credit for attempting to do what was enjoined, but very little for the mode in which the task

was performed, and I used to feel not a little mortified when my versions were placed in contrast with others of admitted merit. At one period of my school-boy days, I was so far left to my own desires, as to become guilty of Verses on a Thunder-Storm, which were much approved of, until a malevolent critic sprung up, in the shape of an apothecary's blue-buskined wife, who affirmed that my most sweet poetry was stolen from an old magazine. I never forgave the imputation, and even now I acknowledge some resentment against the poor woman's memory. She indeed accused me unjustly, when she said I had stolen my brooms ready made; but as I had, like most premature poets, copied all the words and ideas of which my verses consisted, she was so far right, that there was not an original word or thought in the whole six lines. I made one or two faint attempts at verse, after I had undergone this sort of daw-plucking at the hands of the apothecary's wife, but some friend or other always advised me to put my verses in the fire, and, like Dorax in the play, I submitted, though "with a swelling heart." In short, excepting the usual tribute to a mistress's eyebrow, which is the language of passion rather than poetry, I had not for ten years indulged the wish to couple so much as *love* and *dove*, when, finding Lewis in possession of so much reputation, and conceiving that, if I fell behind him in poetical powers, I considerably exceeded him in general information, I suddenly took it into my head to attempt the style by which he had raised himself to fame.

This idea was hurried into execution, in consequence of a temptation which others, as well as the author, found it difficult to resist. The celebrated ballad of "Lenore," by Bürger, was about this time introduced into England; and it is remarkable, that, written as far back as 1775, it was upwards of twenty years before it was known in Britain, though calculated to make so strong an impression. The wild character of the tale was such as struck the imagination of all who read it, although the idea of the lady's ride behind the spectre-horseman had been long before produced by

an English ballad-maker. But this pretended original, if in reality it be such, is so dull, flat, and prosaic, as to leave the distinguished German author all that is valuable in his story, by clothing it with a fanciful wildness of expression, which serves to set forth the marvellous tale in its native terror. The ballad of "Lenore," accordingly, possessed general attractions for such of the English as understood the language in which it is written; and, as if there had been a charm in the ballad, no one seemed to cast his eyes upon it without a desire to make it known by translation to his own countrymen, and six or seven versions were accordingly presented to the public. Although the present author was one of those who intruded his translation on the world at this time, he may fairly exculpate himself from the rashness of entering the lists against so many rivals. The circumstances which threw him into this competition were quite accidental, and of a nature tending to show how much the destiny of human life depends upon unimportant occurrences, to which little consequence is attached at the moment.

About the summer of 1793 or 1794, the celebrated Miss Lætitia Aikin, better known as Mrs. Barbauld, paid a visit to Edinburgh, and was received by such literary society as the place then boasted, with the hospitality to which her talents and her worth entitled her. Among others, she was kindly welcomed by the late excellent and admired Professor Dugald Stewart, his lady, and family. It was in their evening society that Miss Aikin drew from her pocket-book a version of "Lenore," executed by William Taylor, Esq. of Norwich, with as much freedom as was consistent with great spirit and scrupulous fidelity. She read this composition to the company, who were electrified by the tale. It was the more successful, that Mr. Taylor had boldly copied the imitative harmony of the German, and described the spectral journey in language resembling that of the original. Bürger had thus painted the ghostly career:

Und hurre, hurre, hop, hop, hop,
Gings fort in sausendem Galopp,
Dass Ross and Reiter schnoben,
Und Kies und Funken stoben.

The words were rendered by the kindred sounds in English:

"Tramp, tramp, along the land they rode,
Splash, splash, along the sea;
Hurra, the dead can ride apace!
Dost fear to ride with me?"

When Miss Aikin had finished her recitation, she replaced in her pocket-book the paper from which she had read it, and enjoyed the satisfaction of having made a strong impression on the hearers, whose bosoms thrilled yet the deeper, as the ballad was not to be more closely introduced to them.

The author was not present upon this occasion, although he had then the distinguished advantage of being a familiar friend and frequent visitor of Professor Stewart and his family. But he was absent from town while Miss Aikin was in Edinburgh, and it was not until his return, that he found all his friends in rapture with the intelligence and good sense of their visitor, but in particular with the wonderful translation from the German, by means of which she had delighted and astonished them. The enthusiastic description given of Bürger's ballad, and the broken account of the story, of which only two lines were recollected, inspired the author, who had some acquaintance, as has been said, with the German language, and a strong taste for popular poetry, with a desire to see the original.

This was not a wish easily gratified; German works were at that time seldom found in London for sale—in Edinburgh never. A lady of noble German descent,* whose friendship I have enjoyed for many years, found means to procure me a copy of Bürger's works from Hamburgh. The perusal of the original rather exceeded than disappointed the expectations which the

* Born Harriet Countess Bruhl of Martinskirchen, and married to Hugh Scott, Esq. of Harden, the author's relative and much-valued friend.

report of Mr. Stewart's family had induced me to form. At length, when the book had been a few hours in my possession, I found myself giving an animated account of the poem to a friend, and rashly added a promise to furnish a copy in English ballad verse.

I well recollect that I began my task after supper, and finished it about daybreak the next morning, by which time the ideas which the task had a tendency to summon up were rather of an uncomfortable character. As my object was much more to make a good translation of the poem for those whom I wished to please, than to acquire any poetical fame for myself, I retained the two lines which Mr. Taylor had rendered with equal boldness and felicity.

My attempt succeeded far beyond my expectations; and it may readily be believed, that I was induced to persevere in a pursuit which gratified my own vanity, while it seemed to amuse others. I accomplished a translation of "Der Wilde Jäger"—a romantic superstition universally current in Germany, and known also in Scotland and France. In this I took rather more license than in versifying "Lenore;" and I balladized one or two other poems of Bürger with more or less success. In the course of a few weeks, my own vanity, and the favorable opinion of friends, interested by the revival of a species of poetry containing a germ of popularity of which perhaps they were not themselves aware, urged me to the decisive step of sending a selection, at least, of my translations to the press, to save the numerous applications which were made for copies. When was an author deaf to such a recommendation? In 1796, the present author was prevailed on, "by request of friends," to indulge his own vanity by publishing the translation of "Lenore," with that of "The Wild Huntsman," in a thin quarto. This trifling production was never entirely republished; on which account I have reprinted the suppressed translation of the celebrated "Lenore."*

* See No. III. of the Appendix.

I had formerly no reason for omitting it, except a feeling how much it owed to the genius of a contemporary, which, however, had always been acknowledged.

The fate of this, my first publication, was by no means flattering. I distributed so many copies among my friends as materially to interfere with the sale; and the number of translations which appeared in England about the same time, including that of Mr. Taylor, to which I had been so much indebted, and which was published in "The Monthly Magazine," were sufficient to exclude a provincial writer from competition. However different my success might have been, had I been fortunate enough to have led the way in the general scramble for precedence, my efforts sunk unnoticed when launched at the same time with those of Mr. Taylor (upon whose property I had committed the kind of piracy already noticed, and who generously forgave me the invasion of his rights);—of my ingenious and amiable friend of many years, William Robert Spenser;—of Mr. Pye, the laureate of the day, and many others besides. In a word, my adventure, where so many pushed off to sea, proved a dead loss, and a great part of the edition was condemned to the service of the trunk-maker. Nay, so complete was the failure of the unfortunate ballads, that the very existence of them was soon forgotten; and, in a newspaper, in which I very lately read, to my no small horror, a most appalling list of my own various publications, I saw this, my first offence, had escaped the industrious collector, for whose indefatigable research I may fairly wish a better object.

The failure of my first publication did not operate, in any unpleasant degree, either on my feelings or spirits. I was coldly received by strangers, but my reputation began rather to increase among my own friends, and, on the whole, I was more bent to show the world that it had neglected something worth notice, than to be affronted by its indifference. Or rather to speak candidly, I found pleasure in the literary labor in which I had, almost by accident, become engaged, and labored less in the hope of pleasing othe

though certainly without despair of doing so, than in the pursuit of a new and agreeable amusement to myself. I pursued the German language keenly, and, though far from being a correct scholar, became a bold and daring reader, nay even translator, of various dramatic pieces from that tonge.

The want of books at that time, (about 1796,) was a great interruption to the rapidity of my movements; for the young do not know, and perhaps my own contemporaries may have forgotten, the difficulty with which publications were then procured from the continent. The worthy and excellent friend, of whom I gave a sketch many years afterwards in the person of Jonathan Oldbuck, procured me an Adelung's Dictionary, through the mediation of Father Pepper, a monk of the Scotch College of Ratisbon. Other wants of the same nature were supplied by Mrs. Scott of Harden, whose kindness in a similar instance I have had already occasion to acknowledge. Through this lady's connexions on the continent, I obtained copies of Bürger, Schiller, Goethé, and other standard German works; and though the obligation be of a distant date, it still remains impressed on my memory, after a life spent in a constant interchange of friendship and kindness with that family.

Being thus furnished with the necessary originals, I began to translate on all sides, certainly without any thing like an accurate knowledge of the language; and although the dramas of Goethé, Schiller, and others, principally attracted one whose early attention to the German had been arrested by MacKenzie's Dissertation, and the play of "The Robbers," yet the ballad poetry, in which I had made a bold essay, was still my favorite. I was yet more delighted on finding, that the old English, and especially the Scottish language, were so nearly similar to the German, not in sound merely, but in the turn of phrase, that they were capable of being rendered line for line, with very little variation.*

* Among the popular Ballads, or Volkslieder, of the celebrated Herder, is (take one instance out of many) a version of the old Scottish

By degrees, I acquired sufficient confidence to attempt the imitation of what I admired. The ballad called "Glenfinlas" was, I think, the first original poem which I ventured to compose. As it is supposed to be a translation from the Gaelic, I considered myself as liberated from imitating the antiquated language and rude rhythm of the Minstrel ballad. A versification of an Ossianic fragment came nearer to the idea I had formed of my task; for although controversy may have arisen concerning the authenticity of these poems, yet I never heard it disputed, by those whom an accurate knowledge of the Gaelic language rendered competent judges, that in their spirit and diction they exactly resemble fragments of existing poetry of that language, to which no doubt can attach. Indeed the celebrated dispute on that subject, is something like the more bloody, though scarce fiercer controversy, about the Popish Plot in Charles the Second's time, concerning which Dryden has said—

> "Succeeding times will equal folly call,
> Believing nothing, or believing all."

The Celtic people of Erin and Albyn had, in short,

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song of "Sir Patrick Spence," in which, but for difference of orthography, the two languages can be scarcely distinguished from each other. For example—

"The King sits in Dumfermling tower,	"Der Kœnig sitzt in Dumfermlinge Schloss;
Drinking the blood-red wine;	Er trinkt blutröthen Wein;
'Where will I get a good skipper	'O wo triff' ich einen Segler gut
To sail this ship of mine?'"	Dies Schiff zu seglen mein?'"

In like manner, the opening stanza of "Child Waters," and many other Scottish ballads, fall as naturally and easily into the German habits and forms of speech, as if they had originally been composed in that language:

"About Yule, when the wind was cule,	"In Christmessfest, in Winter kalt,
And the round tables began,	Als Tafel rund began,
O there is come to our king's court	Da kam zu König's Hoff und Hall
Mony weel favor'd man."	Manch wackner Ritter an."

It requires only a smattering of both languages, to see at what cheap expense, even of rhyme and language, the popular poetry of the one may be transferred to the other. Hardly any thing is more flattering to a Scottish student of German; it resembles the unexpected discovery of an old friend in a foreign land.

a style of poetry properly called national, though MacPherson was rather an excellent poet than a faithful editor and translator. This style and fashion of poetry, existing in a different language, was supposed to give the original of "Glenfinlas," and the author, or supposed translator, was to pass for one who had used his best command of English to do the Gaelic original justice. In one point, the incidents of the poem were irreconcilable with the costume of the times in which they were laid. The ancient Highland chieftains, when they had a mind to "hunt the dun deer down," did not retreat into solitary bothies, or trust the success of the chase to their own unassisted exertions, without a single gillie to help them; they assembled their clan, and all partook of the sport, forming a ring, or inclosure, called the Tinchell, and driving the prey towards the most distinguished persons of the hunt. This course would not have suited me, so Ronald and Moy were cooped up in their solitary wigwam, like two moorfowl shooters of the present day.

After "Glenfinlas," I undertook another ballad, called "The Eve of St. John." The incidents, except the hints alluded to in the notes annexed to the poem, are entirely imaginary, but the scene was that of my early childhood. Some idle persons had of late years, during the proprietor's absence, torn the iron-grated door of Smallholm Tower from its hinges, and thrown it down the rock. I was an earnest suitor to my friend and kinsman already mentioned, that the dilapidation should be put a stop to, and the mischief repaired. This was readily promised, on condition that I should make a ballad, of which the scene should lie at Smallholm Tower, and among the crags where it is situated.* The ballad was approved of, as well as its companion "Glenfinlas;" and I remember that they procured me many marks of attention and kind-

* This is of little consequence, except in as far as it contradicts a story which I have seen in print, averring that Mr. Scott of Harden was himself about to destroy this ancient building; than which nothing can be more inaccurate.

ness from Duke John of Roxburghe, who gave me the unlimited use of that celebrated collection of volumes from which the Roxburghe Club derives it name.

Thus I was set up for a poet, like a pedler who has got two ballads to begin the world upon, and I hastened to make the round of all my acquaintances, showing my precious wares, and requesting criticism—a boon which no author asks in vain. For it may be observed, that, in the fine arts, those who are in no respect able to produce any specimens themselves, hold themselves not the less entitled to decide upon the works of authors; and justly, no doubt, to a certain degree; for the merits of composition produced for the express purpose of pleasing the world at large, can only be judged of by the opinion of individuals, and perhaps, as in the case of Molière's old woman, the less sophisticated the person consulted so much the better. But I was ignorant, at the time I speak of, that though the applause of the many may justly appreciate the general merits of a piece, it is not so safe to submit such a performance to the more minute criticism of the same individuals, when each, in turn, having seated himself in the censor's chair, has placed his mind in a critical attitude, and delivered his opinion sententiously and *ex cathedrâ*. General applause was in almost every case freely tendered, but the abatements in the way of proposed alterations and corrections, were cruelly puzzling. It was in vain the young author, listening with becoming modesty, and with a natural wish to please, cut and carved, tinkered and coopered, upon his unfortunate ballads—it was in vain that he placed, displaced, replaced, and misplaced; every one of his advisers was displeased with the concessions made to his co-assessors, and the author was blamed by some one, in almost every case, for having made two holes in attempting to patch up one.

At last, after thinking seriously on the subject, I wrote out a fair copy, (of Glenfinlas, I think,) and marked all the various corrections which had been proposed. On the whole, I found that I had been required to alter every verse, almost every line, and the only

stanzas of the whole ballad which escaped criticism, were such as neither could be termed good nor bad, speaking of them as poetry, but were of a mere commonplace character, absolutely necessary for conducting the business of the tale. This unexpected result, after about a fortnight's anxiety, led me to adopt a rule from which I have seldom departed during more than thirty years of literary life. When a friend, whose judgment I respect, has decided, and upon good advisement told me, that a manuscript was worth nothing, or at least possessed no redeeming qualities sufficient to atone for its defects, I have generally cast it aside; but I am little in the custom of paying attention to minute criticism, or of offering such to any friend who may do me the honor to consult me. I am convinced that, in general, in removing even errors of a trivial or venial kind, the character of originality is lost, which, upon the whole, may be that which is most valuable in the production.

About the time that I shook hands with criticism, and reduced my ballads back to their original form, stripping them without remorse of those "lendings" which I had adopted at the suggestion of friends, an opportunity unexpectedly offered of introducing to the world what had hitherto been confined to a circle of friends. Lewis had announced a collection, first intended to bear the title of "Tales of Terror," and afterwards "Tales of Wonder," which last was finally adopted. As this was to be a collection of tales turning on the preternatural, there were risks in the plan of which the ingenious editor was not aware. The supernatural, though appealing to certain powerful emotions very widely sown amongst the human race, is, nevertheless, a spring which is peculiarly apt to lose its elasticity by being too much pressed on, and a collection of ghost stories is not more likely to be terrible, than a collection of jests to be merry or entertaining. But although the proposed work carried in it an obstruction to its success, this was far from being suspected at the time, for the popularity of the editor, and of his compositions, seemed a warrant for his success.

The distinguished favor with which the "Castle Spectre" was received upon the stage, seemed an additional warrant for the safety of his new attempt. I readily agreed to contribute the ballads of "Glenfinlas" and of "The Eve of St. John," with one or two others of less merit; and my friend Dr. Leyden became also a contributor. Mr. Southey, a tower of strength, added "The Old Woman of Berkeley," "Lord William," and several other interesting ballads of the same class, to the proposed collection.

In the mean time, my friend Lewis found it no easy matter to discipline his northern recruits. He was a martinet, if I may so term him, in the accuracy of rhymes and of numbers; I may add, he had a right to be so, for few persons have exhibited more mastery of rhyme, or greater command over the melody of poetry. He was, therefore, rigid in exacting similar accuracy from others, and as I was quite unaccustomed to the mechanical part of poetry, and used rhymes which were merely permissible, as readily as those which were legitimate, contests often arose amongst us, which were exasperated by the pertinacity of my Mentor, who, as all who knew him can testify, was no granter of propositions. As an instance of the obstinacy with which I had so lately adopted a tone of defiance to criticism, the reader will find a few specimens of the lectures which I underwent from my friend Lewis, and which did not at the time produce any effect on my inflexibility, though I did not forget them at a future period.*

The proposed publication of the "Tales of Wonder" was, from one reason or another, postponed till the year 1801, a circumstance by which, of itself, the success of the work was considerably impeded, for protracted expectation always leads to disappointment. But besides, there were circumstances which contributed to its depreciation, some of which were imputable to the editor, or author, and some to the bookseller.

* See No. IV. of the Appendix.

The former remained insensible of the passion for ballads and ballad-mongers having been for some time on the wane, and that with such alteration in the public taste, the chance of success in that line was diminished. What had been at first received as simple and natural, was now sneered at as puerile and extravagant. Another objection was, that my friend Lewis had a high but mistaken opinion of his own powers of humor. The truth was, that though he could throw some gaiety into his lighter pieces, after the manner of the French writers, his attempts at what is called pleasantry in English, aimed at, but were without the quality of humor, and were generally failures. But this he would not allow; and the "Tales of Wonder" were filled, in a sense, with attempts at comedy, which might be generally accounted abortive.

Another objection, which might have been easily foreseen, subjected the editor to a charge of which Mat Lewis was entirely incapable,—that of collusion with his publisher in an undue attack on the pockets of the public. The "Tales of Wonder" formed a work in royal octavo, and were, by large printing, driven out, as it is technically termed, to two volumes, which were sold at a high price. Purchasers murmured at finding that this size had been attained by the insertion of some of the best known pieces of the English language, such as Dryden's "Theodore and Honoria," Parnell's "Hermit," Lisle's "Porsenna King of Russia," and many other popular poems of old date, and generally known, which ought not in conscience to have made part of a volume of tales, "written and collected" by a modern author. His bookseller was also accused in the public prints, whether truly or not I am uncertain, of having attempted to secure to himself the entire profits of the large sale which he expected, by refusing to his brethren the allowances usually, if not in all cases, made to the retail trade.

Lewis, one of the most liberal as well as benevolent of mankind, had not the least participation in these proceedings of his bibliopolist; but his work sunk under the obloquy which was heaped on it by the of-

fended parties. The book was termed "Tales of Plunder," was censured by reviewers, and attacked in newspapers and magazines. A very clever parody was made on the style and person of the author, and the world laughed as willingly as if it had never applauded its late favorite.

Thus, owing to the failure of the vehicle I had chosen, my efforts to present myself before the public as an original writer proved as vain as those by which I had previously endeavored to distinguish myself as a translator. Like Lord Home, however, at the battle of Flodden, I did so far well, that I was able to stand and save myself, and amidst the general depreciation of the "Tales of Wonder," my small share of the obnoxious publication was dismissed without much censure, and in some cases obtained praise from the critics.

The consequence of my escape made me naturally more daring, and I attempted, in my own name, a collection of ballads of various kinds, both ancient and modern, to be connected by the common tie of relation to the Border districts in which I had collected them.* The original preface explains my purpose, and the assistance of various kinds which I met with. The edition was curious, as being the first example of a work printed by my friend and school-fellow, Mr. James Ballantyne, who, at that period, was editor of a provincial paper. When the book came out, in 1802, the imprint, Kelso, was read with wonder by amateurs of typography, who had never heard of such a place, and were astonished at the example of handsome printing which so obscure a town produced.

As for the editorial part of the task, my attempt to imitate the plan and style of Bishop Percy, observing only more strict fidelity concerning my originals, was favorably received by the public, and there was a demand within a short space for a second edition, to which I proposed to add a third volume.* Messrs. Cadell and Davies, the first publishers of the work, declined the publication; but it was undertaken, at a very liberal price, by the well-known firm of Messrs

Longman and Rees of Paternoster Row, and published by them in 1803. It proved, however, in the language of the trade, rather a heavy concern. The demand in Scotland had been supplied by the first edition, and the curiosity of the English was not much awakened by poems in the rude garb of antiquity, accompanied with notes referring to the obscure feuds of barbarous clans, of whose very names civilized history was ignorant.

At this time I stood personally in a different position from that which I occupied when I first dipt my desperate pen in ink for other purposes than those of my profession. In 1796, when I first published the translations from Bürger, I was an insulated individual, with only my own wants to provide for, and having, in a great measure, my own inclinations alone to consult. In 1803, when the second edition of the Minstrelsy appeared, I had arrived at a period of life when men, however thoughtless, encounter duties and circumstances which press consideration and plans of life upon the most careful minds. I had been for some time married—was the father of a rising family, and, though fully enabled to meet the consequent demands upon me, it was my duty and desire to place myself in a situation which would enable me to make honorable provision against the various contingencies of life.

It may be readily supposed that the attempts which I had made in literature had been unfavorable to my success at the bar. The goddess Themis is, at Edinburgh, and I suppose everywhere else, of a peculiarly jealous disposition. She will not readily consent to share her authority, and sternly demands from her votaries not only that real duty be carefully attended to and discharged, but that a certain air of business shall be observed even in the midst of total idleness. It is prudent, if not absolutely necessary, in a young barrister, to appear completely engrossed by his profession; however destitute of employment he may be, he ought to preserve, if possible, the appearance of full occupation. He should at least seem perpetually en-

gaged among his law-papers, dusting them, as it were; and, as Ovid advises the fair,

Si nullus erit pulvis, tamen excute nullum.

Perhaps such extremity of attention is more especially required, considering the great number of counsellors who are called to the bar, and how very small a proportion of them are finally disposed, or find encouragement, to follow the law as a profession. Hence the number of deserters is so great, that the least lingering look behind occasions a young novice to be set down as one of the intending fugitives. Certain it is, that the Scottish Themis was at this time peculiarly jealous of any flirtation with the Muses, on the part of those who had ranged themselves under her banners. This was probably owing to her consciousness of the superior attractions of her rivals. Of late, however, she has relaxed in some instances in this particular, an eminent example of which has been shown in the case of my friend, Mr. Jeffrey, who, after long conducting one of the most influential literary periodicals of the age, with unquestionable ability, has been, by the general consent of his brethren, recently elected to be their Dean of Faculty, or President,—being the highest acknowledgment of his professional talents which they had it in their power to offer. But this is an incident much beyond the ideas of a period of thirty years' distance, when a barrister who really possessed any turn for lighter literature, was at as much pains to conceal it, as if it had in reality been something to be ashamed of; and I could mention more than one instance in which literature and society have suffered loss, that jurisprudence might be enriched.

Such, however, was not my case; for the reader will not wonder that my open interference with matters of light literature diminished my employment in the weightier matters of the law. Nor did the solicitors, upon whose choice the counsel takes rank in his profession, do me less than justice, by regarding others among my contemporaries as fitter to discharge the duty due to their clients, than a young man who w-

taken up with running after ballads, whether Teutonic or national. My profession and I, therefore, came to stand nearly upon the footing on which honest Slender consoled himself with having established with Mistress Anne Page; "There was no great love between us at the beginning, and it pleased Heaven to decrease it on farther acquaintance." I became sensible that the time was come when I must either buckle myself resolutely to the "toil by day, the lamp by night," renouncing all the Delilahs of my imagination, or bid adieu to the profession of the law, and hold another course.

I confess my own inclination revolted from the more severe choice, which might have been deemed by many the wiser alternative. As my transgressions had been numerous, my repentance must have been signalized by unusual sacrifices. I ought to have mentioned, that since my fourteenth or fifteenth year, my health, originally delicate, had become extremely robust. From infancy I had labored under the infirmity of a severe lameness, but, as I believe is usually the case with men of spirit who suffer under personal inconveniencies of this nature, I had, since the improvement of my health, in defiance of this incapacitating circumstance, distinguished myself by the endurance of toil on foot or horseback, having often walked thirty miles a-day, and rode upwards of a hundred, without stopping. In this manner I made many pleasant journeys through parts of the country then not very accessible, gaining more amusement and instruction than I have been able to acquire since I have travelled in a more commodious manner. I practised most sylvan sports also, with some success, and with great delight. But these pleasures must have been all resigned, or used with great moderation, had I determined to regain my station at the bar. It was even doubtful whether I could, with perfect character as a jurisconsult, retain a situation in a volunteer corps of cavalry, which I then held. The threats of invasion were at this time instant and menacing; the call by Britain on her children was universal, and was answered by many, who,

like myself, consulted rather their will than their ability to bear arms. My services, however, were found useful in assisting to maintain the discipline of the corps, being the point on which their constitution rendered them most amenable to military criticism. In other respects, the squadron was a fine one, consisting of handsome men, well mounted and armed at their own expense. My attention to the corps took up a good deal of time; and while it occupied many of the happiest hours of my life, it furnished an additional reason for my reluctance again to encounter the severe course of study indispensable to success in the juridical profession.

On the other hand, my father, whose feelings might have been hurt by my quitting the bar, had been for two or three years dead, so that I had no control to thwart my own inclination; and my income being equal to all the comforts, and some of the elegancies, of life, I was not pressed to an irksome labor by necessity, that most powerful of motives; consequently, I was the more easily seduced to choose the employment which was most agreeable. This was yet the easier, that in 1800 I had obtained the preferment of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, about £300 a-year in value, and which was the more agreeable to me, as in that county I had several friends and relations. But I did not abandon the profession to which I had been educated, without certain prudential resolutions, which, at the risk of some egotism, I will here mention; not without the hope that they may be useful to young persons who may stand in circumstances similar to those in which I then stood.

In the first place, upon considering the lives and fortunes of persons who had given themselves up to literature, or to the task of pleasing the public, it seemed to me, that the circumstances which chiefly affected their happiness and character, were those from which Horace has bestowed upon authors the epithet of the Irritable Race. It requires no depth of philosophic reflection to perceive, that the petty warfare of Pope with the Dunces of his period could not ha

been carried on without his suffering the most acute torture, such as a man must endure from musquitoes, by whose stings he suffers agony, although he can crush them in his grasp by myriads. Nor is it necessary to call to memory the many humiliating instances in which men of the greatest genius have, to avenge some pitiful quarrel, made themselves ridiculous during their lives, to become the still more degraded objects of pity to future times.

Upon the whole, as I had no pretension to the genius of the distinguished persons who had fallen into such errors, I concluded there could be no occasion for imitating them in these mistakes, or what I considered as such; and, in adopting literary pursuits as the principal occupation of my future life, I resolved, if possible, to avoid those weaknesses of temper which seemed to have most easily beset my more celebrated predecessors.

With this view, it was my first resolution to keep as far as was in my power abreast of society, continuing to maintain my place in general company, without yielding to the very natural temptation of narrowing myself to what is called literary society. By doing so, I imagined I should escape the besetting sin of listening to language, which, from one motive or other, ascribes a very undue degree of consequence to literary pursuits, as if they were, indeed, the business, rather than the amusement, of life. The opposite course can only be compared to the injudicious conduct of one who pampers himself with cordial and luscious draughts, until he is unable to endure wholesome bitters. Like Gil Blas, therefore, I resolved to stick by the society of my *commis*, instead of seeking that of a more literary cast, and to maintain my general interest in what was going on around me, reserving the man of letters for the desk and the library.

My second resolution was a corollary from the first. I determined that, without shutting my ears to the voice of true criticism, I would pay no regard to that which assumes the form of satire. I therefore resolved to arm myself with the triple brass of Horace, against

all the roving warfare of satire, parody, and sarcasm; to laugh if the jest was a good one, or, if otherwise, to let it hum and buzz itself to sleep.

It is to the observance of these rules, (according to my best belief,) that, after a life of thirty years engaged in literary labors of various kinds, I attribute my never having been entangled in any literary quarrel or controversy; and, which is a more pleasing result, that I have been distinguished by the personal friendship of my most approved contemporaries of all parties.

I adopted, at the same time, another resolution, on which it may doubtless be remarked, that it was well for me that I had it in my power to do so, and that, therefore, it is a line of conduct which can be less generally applicable in other cases. Yet I fail not to record this part of my plan, convinced that, though it may not be in every one's power to adopt exactly the same resolution, he may nevertheless, by his own exertions, in some shape or other, attain the object on which it was founded, namely, to secure the means of subsistence, without relying exclusively on literary talents. In this respect, I determined that literature should be my staff, but not my crutch, and that the profits of my labor, however convenient otherwise, should not become necessary to my ordinary expenses. With this purpose, I resolved, if the interest of my friends could so far favor me, to retire upon any of the respectable offices of the law, in which persons of that profession are glad to take refuge, when they feel themselves, or are judged by others, incompetent to aspire to its higher offices and honors. Upon such an office an author might hope to retreat, without any perceptible alteration of circumstances, whenever the time should arrive that the public grew weary of his endeavors to please, or he himself should tire of the occupation of authorship. At this period of my life, I possessed so many friends capable of assisting me in this object of ambition, that I could hardly overrate my own prospects of obtaining the moderate preferment to which I limited my wishes; and, in fact, I ob-

tained in no long period the reversion of a situation which completely met them.

Thus far all was well, and the author had been guilty, perhaps, of no great imprudence, when he relinquished his forensic practice with the hope of making some figure in the field of literature. But an established character with the public, in my new capacity, still remained to be acquired. I have noticed, that the translations from Bürger had been unsuccessful, nor had the original poetry which appeared under the auspices of Mr. Lewis, in the "Tales of Wonder," in any great degree raised my reputation. It is true, I had private friends disposed to second me in my efforts to obtain popularity. But I was sportsman enough to know, that, if the gray-hound does not run well, the halloos of his patrons will not obtain the prize for him.

Neither was I ignorant that the practice of ballad-writing was for the present out of fashion, and that any attempt to revive it, or to found a poetical character upon it, would certainly fail of success. The ballad measure itself, which was once listened to as to an enchanting melody, had become hackneyed and sickening, from its being the accompaniment of every grinding hand-organ; and besides, a long work in quatrains, whether those of the common ballad, or such as are termed elegiac, has an effect upon the sense like that of the bed of Procrustes upon the human body; for, as it must be both awkward and difficult to carry on a long sentence from one stanza to another, it follows, that the meaning of each period must be comprehended within four lines, and equally so that it must be extended so as to fill that space. The alternate dilation and contraction thus rendered necessary is singularly unfavorable to narrative composition; and the "Gondibert" of Sir William D'Avenant, though containing many striking passages, has never become popular, owing chiefly to its being told in this species of elegiac verse.

In the dilemma occasioned by this objection, the idea occurred to the author of using the measured

short line, which forms the structure of so much minstrel poetry, that it may be properly termed the Romantic stanza, by way of distinction; and which appears so natural to our language, that the very best of our poets have not been able to protract it into the verse properly called Heroic, without the use of epithets which are, to say the least, unnecessary.* But, on the other hand, the extreme facility of the short couplet, which seems congenial to our language, and was, doubtless for that reason, so popular with our old minstrels, is, for the same reason, apt to prove a snare to the composer who uses it, by encouraging him in a habit of slovenly composition. The necessity of occasional pauses often forces the young poet to pay more attention to sense, as the boy's kite rises highest when the train is loaded by a due counterpoise. I was therefore intimidated by what Byron calls the "fatal facility" of the octo-syllabic verse, which was otherwise better adapted to my purpose of imitating the more ancient poetry.

I was not less at a loss for a subject which might admit of being treated with the simplicity and wildness of the ancient ballad. But accident dictated both a theme and measure, which decided the subject, as well as the structure of the poem.

The lovely young Countess of Dalkeith, afterwards Harriet Duchess of Buccleuch, had come to the land of her husband with the desire of making herself acquainted with its traditions and customs. All who remember this lady will agree, that the intellectual character of her extreme beauty, the amenity and courtesy of her manners, the soundness of her understanding,

* Thus it has been often remarked, that, in the opening couplets of Pope's translation of the Iliad, there are two syllables forming a superfluous word in each line, as may be observed by attending to such words as are printed in Italics.

"Achilles' wrath to Greece the *direful* spring
Of woes unnumber'd, *heavenly* goddess, sing;
That wrath which sent to Pluto's *gloomy* reign,
The souls of *mighty* chiefs in battle slain,
Whose bones, unburied on the *desert* shore,
Devouring dogs and *hungry* vultures tore."

and her unbounded benevolence, gave more the idea of an angelic visitant, than of a being belonging to this nether world; and such a thought was but too consistent with the short space she was permitted to tarry among us. Of course, where all made it a pride and pleasure to gratify her wishes, she soon heard enough of Border lore; among others, an aged gentleman of property,* near Langholm, communicated to her ladyship the story of Gilpin Horner, a tradition in which the narrator, and many more of that country, were firm believers. The young Countess, much delighted with the legend, and the gravity and full confidence with which it was told, enjoined it on me as a task to compose a ballad on the subject. Of course, to hear was to obey; and thus the goblin story, objected to by several critics as an excrescence upon the poem, was, in fact, the occasion of its being written.

A chance similar to that which dictated the subject, gave me also the hint of a new mode of treating it. We had at that time the lease of a pleasant cottage, near Lasswade, on the romantic banks of the Esk, to which we escaped when the vacations of the Court permitted so much leisure. Here I had the pleasure to receive a visit from Mr. Stoddart, (now Sir John Stoddart, Judge-Advocate at Malta,) who was at that time collecting the particulars which he afterwards embodied in his Remarks on Local Scenery in Scotland. I was of some use to him in procuring the information which he desired, and guiding him to the scenes which he wished to see. In return, he made me better ac-

* This was Mr. Beattie of Mickledale, a man then considerably upwards of eighty, of a shrewd and sarcastic temper, which he did not at all times suppress, as the following anecdote will show. A worthy clergyman, now deceased, with better good-will than tact, was endeavoring to push the senior forward in his recollection of Border ballads and legends, by expressing reiterated surprise at his wonderful memory. "No, sir," said old Mickledale; "my memory is good for little, for it cannot retain what ought to be preserved. I can remember all these stories about the auld riding days, which are of no earthly importance; but were you, reverend sir, to repeat your best sermon in this drawing-room, I could not tell you half an hour afterwards what you had been speaking about."

quainted than I had hitherto been with the poetic effusions which have since made the Lakes of Westmoreland, and the authors by whom they have been sung, so famous wherever the English tongue is spoken.

I was already acquainted with the "Joan of Arc," the "Thalaba," and the "Metrical Ballads" of Mr. Southey, which had found their way to Scotland, and were generally admired. But Mr. Stoddart, who had the advantage of personal friendship with the authors, and who possessed a strong memory with an excellent taste, was able to repeat to me many long specimens of their poetry, which had not yet appeared in print. Amongst others, was the striking fragment called Christabel, by Mr. Coleridge, which, from the singularly irregular structure of the stanzas, and the liberty which it allowed the author to adapt the sound to the sense, seemed to be exactly suited to such an extravaganza as I meditated on the subject of Gilpin Horner. As applied to comic and humorous poetry, this mescolanza of measures had been already used by Anthony Hall, Anstey, Dr. Wolcott, and others; but it was in Christabel that I first found it used in serious poetry, and it is to Mr. Coleridge that I am bound to make the acknowledgment due from the pupil to his master. I observe that Lord Byron, in noticing my obligations to Mr. Coleridge, which I have been always most ready to acknowledge, expressed, or was understood to express, a hope, that I did not write a parody on Mr. Coleridge's productions.* On this subject I have only to say, that I do not even know the parody which is alluded to; and were I ever to take the unbecoming freedom of censuring a man of Mr. Coleridge's extraordinary talents, it would be for the caprice and indolence with which he has thrown from him, as if in mere wantonness, those unfinished scraps of poetry, which, like the Torso of antiquity, defy the skill of his poetical brethren to complete them. The charming fragments which the author abandons to their fate, are surely too valuable to be treated like the proofs of

* Medwyn's Conversations of Lord Byron, p. 309.

careless engravers, the sweepings of whose studies often make the fortune of some pains-taking collector.

I did not immediately proceed upon my projected labor, though I was now furnished with a subject, and with a structure of verse which might have the effect of novelty to the public ear, and afford the author an opportunity of varying his measure with the variations of a romantic subject. On the contrary, it was, to the best of my recollection, more than a year after Mr. Stoddart's visit, that, by way of experiment, I composed the first two or three stanzas of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." I was shortly afterwards visited by two intimate friends, one of whom still survives. They were men whose talents might have raised them to the highest station in literature, had they not preferred exerting them in their own profession of the law, in which they attained equal preferment. I was in the habit of consulting them on my attempts at composition, having equal confidence in their sound taste and friendly sincerity. In this specimen I had, in the phrase of the Highland servant, packed all that was my own *at least*, for I had also included a line of invocation, a little softened, from Coleridge—

"Mary, Mother, shield us well."

As neither of my friends said much to me on the subject of the stanzas I showed them before their departure, I had no doubt that their disgust had been greater than their good-nature chose to express. Looking upon them, therefore, as a failure, I threw the manuscript into the fire, and thought as little more as I could of the matter. Some time afterwards I met one of my two counsellors, who inquired, with considerable appearance of interest, about the progress of the romance I had commenced, and was greatly surprised at learning its fate. He confessed that neither he nor our mutual friend had been at first able to give a precise opinion on a poem so much out of the common road, but that as they walked home together to the city, they had talked much on the subject, and the result was an earnest desire that I would proceed with the composi-

tion. He also added, that some sort of prologue might be necessary, to place the mind of the hearers in the situation to understand and enjoy the poem, and recommended the adoption of such quaint mottoes as Spenser has used to announce the contents of the chapters of the Faery Queen, such as—

> "Babe's bloody hands may not be cleansed,
> The face of Golden Mean.
> Her sisters two Extremities,
> Her strive to banish clean."

I entirely agreed with my friendly critic in the necessity of having some sort of pitch-pipe, which might make readers aware of the object, or rather the tone, of the publication. But I doubted whether, in assuming the oracular style of Spenser's mottoes, the interpreter might not be censured as the harder to be understood of the two. I therefore introduced the Old Minstrel, as an appropriate prolocutor, by whom the lay might be sung, or spoken, and the introduction of whom betwixt the cantoes, might remind the reader at intervals, of the time, place, and circumstances of the recitation. This species of *cadre*, or frame, afterwards afforded the poem its name of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel."

The work was subsequently shown to other friends during its progress, and received the *imprimatur* of Mr. Francis Jeffrey, who had been for some time distinguished by his critical talent.

The poem, being once licensed by the critics as fit for the market, was soon finished, proceeding at about the rate of a canto per week. There was, indeed, little occasion for pause or hesitation, when a troublesome rhyme might be accommodated by an alteration of the stanza, or where an incorrect measure might be remedied by a variation in the rhyme. It was finally published in 1805, and may be regarded as the first work in which the writer, who has been since so voluminous, laid his claim to be considered as an original author.

The book was published by Longman and Company, and Archibald Constable and Company. The principal of the latter firm was then commencing that course of bold and liberal industry which was of so much ad-

vantage to his country, and might have been so to himself, but for causes which it is needless to enter into here. The work, brought out on the usual terms of division of profits between the author and publishers, was not long after purchased by them for £500, to which Messrs. Longman and Company afterwards added £100, in their own unsolicited kindness, in consequence of the uncommon success of the work. It was handsomely given to supply the loss of a fine horse, which broke down suddenly while the author was riding with one of the worthy publishers.

It would be great affectation not to own frankly, that the author expected some success from "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." The attempt to return to a more simple and natural style of poetry was likely to be welcomed, at a time when the public had become tired of heroic hexameters, with all the buckram and binding which belong to them of later days. But whatever might have been his expectations, whether moderate or unreasonable, the result left them far behind, for among those who smiled on the adventurous Minstrel, were numbered the great names of William Pitt and Charles Fox. Neither was the extent of the sale inferior to the character of the judges who received the poem with approbation. Upwards of thirty thousand copies of the Lay were disposed of by the trade; and the author had to perform a task difficult to human vanity, when called upon to make the necessary deductions from his own merits, in a calm attempt to account for his popularity.

I have now mentioned the circumstances which, so far as my literary life is concerned, induced me to resign the active pursuit of an honorable profession, for the more precarious resources of literature. My appointment to the Sheriffdom of Selkirk called for a change of residence. I left, therefore, the cottage I had upon the side of the Esk, for the "pleasanter banks of the Tweed," in order to comply with the law, which requires that the Sheriff shall be resident, at least during a certain number of months, within his jurisdiction. We found a delightful retirement, by

my becoming the tenant of my intimate friend and cousin-german Colonel Russel, in his mansion of Ashiesteel, which was unoccupied, from his absence on military service in India. The house was adequate to our accommodation, and the exercise of a limited hospitality. The situation is uncommonly beautiful, by the side of a fine river, whose streams are there very favorable for angling, surrounded by the remains of natural woods, and by hills abounding in game. In point of society, according to the heartfelt phrase of Scripture, we dwelt "amongst our own people;" and as the distance from the metropolis was only thirty miles, we were not out of reach of our Edinburgh friends, in which city we spent the terms of the summer and winter Sessions of the Court, that is, five or six months in the year.

An important circumstance had, about the same time, taken place in my life. Hopes had been held out to me from an influential quarter, of a nature to relieve me from the anxiety which I must have otherwise felt, as one upon the precarious tenure of whose own life rested the principal prospects of his family, and especially as one who had necessarily some dependence upon the favor of the public, which is proverbially capricious; though it is but justice to add, that, in my own case, I have not found it so. Mr. Pitt had expressed a wish to my personal friend, the Right Honorable William Dundas, now Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, that some fitting opportunity should be taken to be of service to me; and as my views and wishes pointed to a future rather than an immediate provision, an opportunity of accomplishing this was soon found. One of the Principal Clerks of Session, as they are called, (official persons who occupy an important and responsible situation, and enjoy a considerable income,) who had served upwards of thirty years, felt himself, from age, and the infirmity of deafness with which it was accompanied, desirous of retiring from his official situation. As the law then stood, such official persons were entitled to bargain with their successors, either for a sum of money, which

was usually a considerable one, or for an interest in the emoluments of the office during their life. My predecessor, whose services had been unusually meritorious, stipulated for the emoluments of his office during his life, while I should enjoy the survivorship, on the condition that I discharged the duties of the office in the mean time. Mr. Pitt, however, having died in the interval, his administration was dissolved, and was succeeded by that known by the name of the Fox and Grenville Ministry. My affair was so far completed, that my commission lay in the office subscribed by his Majesty; but, from hurry or mistake, the interest of my predecessor was not expressed in it, as had been usual in such cases. Although, therefore, it only required payment of the fees, I could not in honor take out the commission in the present state, since, in the event of my dying before him, the gentleman whom I succeeded must have lost the vested interest which he had stipulated to retain. I had the honor of an interview with Earl Spencer on the subject, and he, in the most handsome manner, gave directions that the commission should issue as originally intended; adding, that the matter having received the royal assent, he regarded only as a claim of justice what he would have willingly done as an act of favor. I never saw Mr. Fox on this, or on any other occasion, and never made any application to him, conceiving that in doing so, I might have been supposed to express political opinions contrary to those which I had always professed. In his private capacity, there is no man to whom I would have been more proud to owe an obligation, had I been so distinguished.

By this arrangement I obtained the survivorship of an office the emoluments of which were fully adequate to my wishes; and as the law respecting the mode of providing for superannuated officers was, about five or six years after, altered from that which admitted the arrangement of assistant and successor, my colleague very handsomely took the opportunity of the alteration, to accept of a retiring annuity provided in such cases, and admitted me to the full benefit of the office.

But although the certainty of succeeding to a considerable income, at the time I obtained it, seemed to assure me of a quiet harbor in my old age, I did not escape my share of inconvenience from the contrary tides and currents by which we are so often encountered in our journey through life. Indeed, the publication of my next poetical attempt was prematurely accelerated, from one of those unpleasant accidents which can neither be foreseen nor avoided.

I had formed the prudent resolution to endeavor to bestow a little more labor than I had yet done on my productions, and to be in no hurry again to announce myself as a candidate for literary fame. Accordingly, particular passages of a poem, which was finally called "Marmion," were labored with a good deal of care, by one by whom much care was seldom bestowed. Whether the work was worth the labor or not, I am no competent judge; but I may be permitted to say, that the period of its composition was a very happy one, in my life; so much so, that I remember with pleasure, at this moment, some of the spots in which particular passages were composed. It is probably owing to this, that the Introductions to the several Cantoes assumed the form of familiar epistles to my intimate friends, in which I alluded, perhaps more than was necessary or graceful, to my domestic occupations and amusements—a loquacity which may be excused by those who remember, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

The misfortunes of a near relation and friend, which happened at this time, led me to alter my prudent determination, which had been, to use great precaution in sending this poem into the world; and made it convenient at least, if not absolutely necessary, to hasten its publication. The publishers of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," emboldened by the success of that poem, willingly offered a thousand pounds for "Marmion." The transaction being no secret, afforded Lord Byron, who was then at general war with all who blacked paper, an opportunity to include me in his satire, entitled "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

I never could conceive how an arrangement between an author and his publishers, if satisfactory to the persons concerned, could afford matter of censure to any third party. I had taken no unusual or ungenerous means of enhancing the value of my merchandise,—I had never higgled a moment about the bargain, but accepted at once what I considered the handsome offer of my publishers. These gentlemen, at least, were not of opinion that they had been taken advantage of in the transaction, which indeed was one of their own framing; on the contrary, the sale of the Poem was so far beyond their expectation, as to induce them to supply the author's cellars with what is always an acceptable present to a young Scottish housekeeper, namely, a hogshead of excellent claret.

The Poem was finished in too much haste, to allow me an opportunity of softening down, if not removing, some of its most prominent defects. The nature of Marmion's guilt, although similar instances were found, and might be quoted, as existing in feudal times, was nevertheless not sufficiently peculiar to be indicative of the character of the period, forgery being the crime of a commercial, rather than a proud and warlike age. This gross defect ought to have been remedied or palliated. Yet I suffered the tree to lie as it had fallen. I remember my friend Dr. Leyden, then in the East, wrote me a furious remonstrance on the subject. I have, nevertheless, always been of opinion, that corrections, however necessary, have a bad effect after publication. An author is never so decidedly condemned as on his own confession, and may long find apologists and partisans until he gives up his own cause. I was not, therefore, inclined to afford matter for censure out of my own admissions; and, by good fortune, the novelty of the subject, and, if I may say so, some force and vivacity of description, were allowed to atone for many imperfections. Thus the second experiment on the public patience, generally the most perilous,—for the public are then most apt to judge with rigor what in the first instance they had received, perhaps, with imprudent generosity,—

was in my case decidedly successful. I had the good fortune to pass this ordeal favorably, and the return of sales before me makes the copies amount to thirty-six thousand printed between 1805 and 1825, besides a considerable sale since that period.

After the success of "Marmion," I felt inclined to exclaim, with Ulysses in the "Odyssey"—

> Οὗτος μὲν δὴ ἄεθλος ἀάατος ἐκτετέλεσται.
> Νῦν ἄυτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον.*

> "One venturous game my hand has won to-day—
> Another, gallants, yet remains to play."

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds, and political dissensions, which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem, the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honorable foe. The Poems of Ossian had, by their popularity, sufficiently shown, that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

I had also read a great deal, and heard more, concerning that romantic country, where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn; and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days. This Poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful, and so deeply imprinted on my recollections, was a labor of love, and it was no less so

* Odys. χ. l. 5.

to recall the manners and incidents introduced. The frequent custom of James IV., and particularly of James V., to walk through their kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting, if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady, to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me, what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning, (that happening to be the most convenient time to me for composition.) At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. "Do not be so rash," she said, "my dearest cousin. You are already popular—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high—do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favorite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity." I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose—

> "He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch
> To gain or lose it all."

"If I fail," I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, "it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life; you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed,

> "Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
> The dirk, and the feather, and a'!"

Afterwards I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence. Nevertheless, although I answered

thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname, I acknowledge that my confidence was considerably shaken by the warning of her excellent taste and unbiassed friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retractation of the unfavorable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to effect that change of opinion. In such cases, affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favorable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to "heeze up my hope," like the minstrel in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field-sports, which we often pursued together.

As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashiesteel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of "The Lady of the Lake," in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favorable a representative of readers at large. It is, of course, to be supposed, that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared, in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after such a severe chase. I own I was much encouraged by the species of reverie which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Nimrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale. Another of his re-

marks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the King with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds his bugle to summon his attendants. He was probably thinking of the lively, but somewhat licentious old ballad, in which the denouement of a royal intrigue takes place as follows:

"He took a bugle frae his side,
He blew both loud and shrill,
And four-and-twenty belted knights
Came skipping ower the hill;
Then he took out a little knife,
Let all his duddies fa',
And he was the brawest gentleman
That was amang them a'.
And we'll go no more a-roving, &c.

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect, with which the Irish post-boy is said to reserve a "trot for the avenue."

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale, I went into Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After a considerable delay, the "Lady of the Lake" appeared in June 1810; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of Fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favors for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of public reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is

said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful, or so superabundantly candid, as to despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my own opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from partiality to me which I could not have claimed from merit; and I endeavored to deserve the partiality, by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public, or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion; and for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labour, that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection, that if posterity should think me undeserving of the favor with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, "they could not say but what I *had* the crown," and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism, on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champion of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation which the caprice, rather than the judgment, of the public had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the

negative prescription. Accordingly, those who choose to accompany me a little farther in these remarks, will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a a poet to figure as a novelist; as the ballad says, Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe.

It only remains for me to say, that, during my short pre-eminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is as sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops furiously through a village must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know, that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall; nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs, find their own level; and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up, as school-boys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off, wisely remembering, that they are, in such cases, apt to explode in the handling. Let me add, that my reign (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good-nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public as were in my power; and I had the advantage, rather an uncommon one with our irritable race, to enjoy general favor, without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

Between the publication of "The Lady of the Lake," which was so eminently successful, and that of "Rokeby" in 1813, three years intervened. I shall not, I believe, be accused of ever having attempted to usurp a superiority over many men of genius, my contemporaries; but in point of popularity, not of actual talent, the caprice of the public had certainly given me such a temporary superiority over men, of whom, in regard to poetical fancy and feeling, I scarcely thought my-

self worthy to loose the shoe-latch. On the other hand, it would be absurd affectation in me to deny, that I conceived myself to understand, more perfectly than many of my contemporaries, the manner most likely to interest the great mass of mankind. Yet, even with this belief, I must truly and fairly say, that I always considered myself rather as one who held the bets in time to be paid over to the winner, than as having any pretence to keep them in my own right.

In the mean time years crept on; and not without their usual depredations on the passing generation. My sons had arrived at the age when the paternal home was no longer their best abode, as both were destined to active life. The field-sports, to which I was peculiarly attached, had now less interest, and were replaced by other amusements of a more quiet character; and the means and opportunity of pursuing these were to be sought for. I had, indeed, for some years attended to farming, a knowledge of which is, or at least was then, indispensable to the comforts of a family residing in a solitary country-house; but although this was the favorite amusement of many of my friends, I have never been able to consider it as a source of pleasure. I never could think it a matter of passing importance, that my cattle, or crops, were better or more plentiful than those of my neighbors, and nevertheless I began to feel the necessity of some more quiet out-door occupation than I had hitherto pursued. I purchased a small farm of about 100 acres, with the purpose of planting and improving it, to which property circumstances afterwards enabled me to make considerable additions; and thus an era took place in my life, almost equal to the important one mentioned by the Vicar of Wakefield, when he removed from the Blue-room to the Brown. In point of neighborhood, at least, the change of residence made little more difference. Abbotsford, to which we removed, was only six or seven miles down the Tweed, and lay on the same beautiful stream. It did not possess the romantic character of Ashiesteel, my former residence; but it had a stretch of meadow-land along the river, and

possessed, in the phrase of the landscape-gardener, considerable capabilities. Above all, the land was my own, like Uncle Toby's Bowling-green, to do what I would with. It had been, though the gratification was long postponed, an early wish of mine to connect myself with my mother-earth, and prosecute those experiments by which a species of creative power is exercised over the face of nature. I can trace, even to childhood, a pleasure derived from Dodsley's account of Shenstone's Leasowes, and I envied the poet much more for the pleasure of accomplishing the objects detailed in his friend's sketch of his grounds, than for the possession of pipe, crook, flock, and Phillis to the boot of all. My memory also, tenacious of quaint expressions, still retained a phrase which it had gathered from an old almanac of Charles the Second's time, (when every thing down to almanacs affected to be smart,) in which the reader, in the month of June, is advised for health's sake to take a walk of a mile or two before breakfast, and, if he can possibly so manage, to let his exercise be taken upon his own land.

With the satisfaction of having attained the fulfilment of an early and long-cherished hope, I commenced my improvements, as delightful in their progress as those of the child who first makes a dress for a new doll. The nakedness of the land was in time hidden by woodlands of considerable extent—the smallest of possible cottages was progressively expanded into a sort of dream of a mansion-house, whimsical in the exterior, but convenient within. Nor did I forget what is the natural pleasure of every man who has been a reader, I mean the filling the shelves of a tolerably large library. All these objects I kept in view, to be executed as convenience should serve; and although I knew many years must elapse before they could be attained, I was of a disposition to comfort myself with the Spanish proverb, "Time and I against any two."

The difficult and indispensable point, of finding a permanent subject of occupation, was now at length attained; but there was annexed to it the necessity of

becoming again a candidate for public favor; for, as I was turned improver on the earth of the every-day world, it was under condition that the small tenement of Parnassus, which might be accessible to my labors, should not remain uncultivated.

I meditated, at first, a poem on the subject of Bruce, in which I made some progress, but afterwards judged it advisable to lay it aside, supposing that an English story might have more novelty; in consequence, the precedence was given to "Rokeby."

If subject and scenery could have influenced the fate of a poem, that of "Rokeby" should have been eminently distinguished; for the grounds belonged to a dear friend, with whom I had lived in habits of intimacy for many years, and the place itself united the romantic beauties of the wilds of Scotland with the rich and smiling aspect of the southern portion of the island. But the Cavaliers and Roundheads, whom I attempted to summon up to tenant this beautiful region, had for the public neither the novelty nor the peculiar interest of the primitive Highlanders. This, perhaps, was scarcely to be expected, considering that the general mind sympathizes readily and at once with the stamp which nature herself has affixed upon the manners of a people living in a simple and patriarchal state; whereas it has more difficulty in understanding or interesting itself in manners which are founded upon those peculiar habits of thinking or acting, which are produced by the progress of society. We could read with pleasure the tale of the adventures of a Cossac or a Mongol Tartar, while we only wonder and stare over those of the lovers in the "Pleasing Chinese History," where the embarrassments turn upon difficulties arising out of unintelligible delicacies peculiar to the customs and manners of that affected people.

The cause of my failure had, however, a far deeper root. The manner, or style, which, by its novelty, attracted the public in an unusual degree, had now, after having been three times before them, exhausted the patience of the reader, and began in the fourth to lose

its charms. The reviewers may be said to have apostrophized the author in the language of Parnell's Edwin:

> "And here reverse the charm, he cries,
> And let it fairly now suffice,
> The gambol has been shown."

The licentious combination of rhymes, in a manner not perhaps very congenial to our language, had not been confined to the author. Indeed, in most similar cases, the inventors of such novelties have their reputation destroyed by their own imitators, as Actæon fell under his own dogs. The present author, like Bobadil, had taught his trick of fence to a hundred gentlemen, (and ladies,) who could fence very nearly, or quite, as well as himself. For this there was no remedy; the harmony became tiresome and ordinary, and both the original inventor and his invention must have fallen into contempt, if he had not found out another road to public favor. What has been said of the metre only, must be considered to apply equally to the structure of the Poem and of the style. The very best passages of any popular style are not, perhaps, susceptible of imitation, but they may be approached by men of talent; and those who are less able to copy them, at least lay hold of their peculiar features, so as to produce a burlesque instead of a serious copy. In either way, the effect of it is rendered cheap and common; and, in the latter case, ridiculous to boot. The evil consequences to an author's reputation are at least as fatal as those which befall a composer, when his melody falls into the hands of the street ballad-singer.

Of the unfavorable species of imitation, the author's style gave room to a very large number, owing to an appearance of facility to which some of those who used the measure unquestionably leaned too far. The effect of the more favorable imitations, composed by persons of talent, was almost equally unfortunate to the original minstrel, by showing that they could overshoot him with his own bow. In short, the popularity which once attended the *School*, as it was called, was now fast decaying.

Besides all this, to have kept his ground at the crisis

when "Rokeby" appeared, its author ought to have put forth his utmost strength; and to have possessed at least all his original advantages, for a mighty and unexpected rival was advancing on the stage—a rival not in poetical powers only, but in that of attracting popularity, in which the present writer had preceded better men than himself. The reader will easily see that Byron is here meant, who, after a little velitation of no great promise, now appeared as a serious candidate, in the "First Canto of Childe Harold." I was astonished at the power evinced by that work, which neither the "Hours of Idleness,' nor the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," had prepared me to expect from its author. There was a depth in his thought, an eager abundance in his diction, which argued full confidence in the inexhaustible resources of which he felt himself possessed; and there was some appearance of that labor of the file, which indicates that the author is conscious of the necessity of doing every justice to his work, that it may pass warrant. Lord Byron was also a traveller, a man whose ideas were fired by having seen, in distant scenes of difficulty and danger, the places whose very names are recorded in our bosoms as the shrines of ancient poetry. For his own misfortune, perhaps, but certainly to the high increase of his poetical character, nature had mixed in Lord Byron's system those passions which agitate the human heart with most violence, and which may be said to have hurried his bright career to an early close. There would have been little wisdom in measuring my force with so formidable an antagonist; and I was as likely to tire of playing the second fiddle in the concert, as my audience of hearing me. Age also was advancing. I was growing insensible to those subjects of excitation by which youth is agitated. I had around me the most pleasant but least exciting of all society, that of kind friends and an affectionate family. My circle of employments was a narrow one; it occupied me constantly, and it became daily more difficult for me to interest myself in poetical composition :—

"How happily the days of Thalaba went by!"

Yet, though conscious that I must be, in the opinion of good judges, inferior to the place I had for four or five years held in letters, and feeling alike that the latter was one to which I had only a temporary right, I could not brook the idea of relinquishing literary occupation, which had been so long my chief employment. Neither was I disposed to choose the alternative of sinking into a mere editor and commentator, though that was a species of labor which I had practised, and to which I was attached. But I could not endure to think that I might not, whether known or concealed, do something of more importance. My inmost thoughts were those of the Trojan Captain in the galley-race,—

> Non jam prima peto Mnestheus; neque vincere certo:
> Quanquam O,—Sed superent quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti:
> Extremos pudeat rediisse: hoc, vincite, cives,
> Et prohibete nefas.*

I had, indeed, some private reasons for my "Quanquam O," which were not worse than those of Mnestheus. I have already hinted that the materials were collected for a poem on the subject of Bruce, and fragments of it had been shown to some of my friends, and received with applause. Notwithstanding, therefore, the eminent success of Byron, and the great chance of his taking the wind out of my sails, there was, I judged, a species of cowardice in desisting from the task which I had undertaken, and it was time enough to retreat when the battle should be more decidedly lost. The sale of "Rokeby," excepting as compared with that of "The Lady of the Lake," was in the highest degree respectable, and as it included fifteen hundred quartoes, in those quarto-reading days, the trade had no reason to be dissatisfied.

I could hardly have chosen a subject more popular in Scotland, than any thing connected with the Bruce's history, unless I had attempted that of Wallace. But I am decidedly of opinion, that a popular, or what is called a *taking* title, though well qualified to insure

* *Æneid*, lib. v. lin. 294.

the publishers against loss, and clear their shelves of the original impression, is rather apt to be hazardous than otherwise to the reputation of the author. He who attempts a subject of distinguished popularity, has not the privilege of awakening the enthusiasm of his audience; on the contrary, it is already awakened, and glows, it may be, more ardently than that of the author himself. In this case, the warmth of the author is inferior to that of the party whom he addresses, who has, therefore, little chance of being, in Bayes's phrase, "elevated and surprised" by what he has thought of with more enthusiasm than the writer. The sense of this risk, joined to the consciousness of striving against wind and tide, made the task of composing the proposed Poem somewhat heavy and hopeless; but, like the prize-fighter in "As You Like it," I was to wrestle for my reputation, and not neglect any advantage.

To endeavor to discover some localities which might be useful, in the Poem with which I was thus threatening the public, was the business, so far as I could be said to have any, of a most agreeable pleasure-voyage, during which I visited in social and friendly company the coasts and islands of Scotland. In the summer and autumn of 1814, I was invited to join a party of Commissioners for the Northern Light-house service, who proposed making a voyage round the coast of Scotland, and through its various groups of islands, chiefly for the purpose of seeing the condition of the many light-houses under their direction; edifices so important, whether regarding them as benevolent or political institutions. Among the Commissioners who manage this important public concern, the Sheriff of each county of Scotland, which borders on the sea, holds ex-officio a place in the board. These gentlemen act in every respect gratuitously, but have the use of an armed yacht, well found and fitted up, when they choose to visit the light-houses. An excellent engineer, Mr. Robert Stevenson, is attached to the board, to afford the benefit of his professional advice. I accompanied this expedition as a guest; for Selkirkshire, though it calls the author Sheriff, has not, like

the kingdom of Bohemia, in Corporal Trim's story, a seaport in its circuit, nor its magistrate, of course, any place at the Board of Commissioners—a circumstance of little consequence, where all were old and intimate friends, bred to the same profession, and disposed to accommodate each other in every possible manner.

The nature of the important business, which was the principal purpose of the voyage, was connected with the amusement of visiting the leading objects of a traveller's curiosity; for the wild cape, or formidable shelve, which requires to be marked out by a light-house, is generally at no great distance from the most magnificent scenery of rocks, caves, and billows. Our time too was at our own disposal, and as most of us were fresh-water sailors, we could at any time make a fair wind out of a foul one, and run before the gale in quest of some object which lay under our lee.

With these purposes of public utility, and some personal amusement in view, we left the port of Leith on the 26th of July, 1814; ran along the east coast of Scotland, viewing its different curiosities; stood over to Zetland and Orkney, where we were some time detained by the wonders of the country, which displayed so much of what was new to us; and, having seen what was curious in the Ultima Thule of the ancients, where the sun hardly thought it worth while to go to bed, since his rising was at this season so early, we doubled the extreme northern termination of Scotland, and took a rapid survey of the Hebrides, where we found many kind friends. There, that our little expedition might not want the dignity of danger, we were favored with a distant glimpse of what was said to be an American cruiser, and had an opportunity to consider what a pretty figure we should have made, had the voyage ended in our being carried captive to the United States. After visiting the romantic shores of Morven, and the vicinity of Oban, we made a run to the coast of Ireland, and visited the Giant's Causeway, that we might compare it with Staffa, which we had surveyed in our course. At length, about the middle

of September, we ended our voyage in the Clyde, at the port of Greenock.

And thus terminated our pleasant tour, to which our equipments gave unusual facilities, as the ship's company could form a strong boat's crew, independent of those who might be left on board the vessel, which permitted us the freedom to land wherever our curiosity carried us. Let me add, while reviewing for a moment a sunny portion of my life, that among the six or seven friends who performed this voyage together, some of them doubtless of different tastes and pursuits, and remaining for several weeks on board a small vessel, there never occurred the slightest dispute or disagreement, each seeming anxious to submit his own particular wishes to those of his friends. By this mutual accommodation, all the purposes of our little expedition were obtained, while for a time we might have adopted the lines of Allan Cunningham's fine seasong—

> "The world of waters was our home,
> And merry men were we."

But sorrow mixes her memorials with the purest remembrances of pleasure. On returning from the voyage, which had proved so satisfactory, I found that fate had deprived her country of a lady, qualified to adorn the high rank which she held, and who had long admitted me to a share of her friendship. The accomplished and excellent person, who had recommended to me the subject for "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," and to whom I proposed to inscribe what I suspected might be the close of my poetical labors, was unexpectedly removed from a world, which she seemed only to have visited for purposes of kindness and benevolence. The subsequent loss also of one of those comrades who made up the party, casts its shade on recollections which, but for these embitterments, would be otherwise so pleasing. It is needless to say how the author's feelings, or the composition of his trifling work, were affected by the former occurrence, which occasioned so many tears and so much sorrow. True it is, that "The Lord of the Isles" was concluded, unwill-

ingly and in haste, under the painful feeling of one who has a task which must be finished, rather than with the ardor of one who endeavors to perform that task well. Although the Poem cannot be said to have made a favorable impression on the public, the sale of fifteen thousand copies enabled the author to retreat from the field with the honors of war.'

'In the mean time, what was necessarily to be considered as a failure, was much reconciled to my feelings by the success attending my attempt in another species of composition. "Waverley" had, under strict incognito, taken its flight from the press, just before I set out upon the voyage already mentioned; it had now made its way to popularity, and the success of that work and the volumes which followed, was sufficient to have satisfied a greater appetite for applause than I have at any time possessed.

I may as well add in this place, that being much urged by my intimate friend, now unhappily no more, William Erskine, (a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinedder,) I agreed to write the little romantic tale called the "Bridal of Triermain;" but it was on the condition, that he should make no serious effort to disown the composition, if report should lay it at his door. As he was more than suspected of a taste for poetry, and as I took care, in several places, to mix something which might resemble (as far as was in my power) my friend's feeling and manner, the train easily caught, and two large editions were sold. A third being called for, Lord Kinedder became unwilling to aid any longer a deception which was going farther than he expected or desired, and the real author's name was given. Upon another occasion, I sent up another of these trifles, which, like schoolboy's kites, served to show how the wind of popular taste was setting. The manner was supposed to be that of a rude minstrel, or Scald, in opposition to the "Bridal of Triermain," which was designed to belong rather to the Italian school. This new fugitive piece was called "Harold the Dauntless;" and I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the

very name which Lord Byron had made so famous. It encountered rather an odd fate. My ingenious friend, Mr. James Hogg, had published, about the same time, a work called the "Poetic Mirror," containing imitations of the principal living poets. There was in it a very good imitation of my own style, which bore such a resemblance to "Harold the Dauntless," that there was no discovering the original from the imitation; and I believe that many who took the trouble of thinking upon the subject, were rather of opinion that my ingenious friend was the true, and not the fictitious Simon Pure. Since this period, which was in the year 1816, the author has not been an intruder on the public by any poetical work of importance.

I had assumed the character of a follower of literature for several years before I seriously thought of attempting a work of imagination in prose, although one or two of my poetical attempts did not differ from romances otherwise than by being written in verse. But yet, I may observe, that about that time (now, alas! thirty years since) I had nourished the ambitious desire of composing a tale of chivalry, which was to be in the style of the Castle of Otranto, with plenty of Border characters, and supernatural incident. Having found unexpectedly a chapter of this intended work among some old papers, I have subjoined it, thinking some readers may account as curious, the first attempts at romantic composition by an author, who has since written so much in that department.* And those who complain, not unreasonably, of the profusion of the Tales which have followed Waverley, may bless their stars at the narrow escape they have made, by the commencement of the inundation, which had so nearly taken place in the first year of the century, being postponed for fifteen years later.

This particular subject was never resumed; but I did not abandon the idea of fictitious composition in

* See No. VI. of the Appendix.

prose, though I determined to give another turn to the style of the work.

My early recollections of the Highland scenery and customs made so favorable an impression in the poem of the Lady of the Lake, that I was induced to think of attempting something of the same kind in prose. I had been a good deal in the Highlands at a time when they were much less accessible, and much less visited, than they have been of late years, and was acquainted with many of the old warriors of 1745, who were, like most veterans, easily induced to fight their battles over again, for the benefit of a willing listener like myself. It naturally occurred to me, that the ancient traditions and high spirit of a people, who, living in a civilized age and country, retained so strong a tincture of manners belonging to an early period of society, must afford a subject favorable for romance, if it should not prove a curious tale marred in the telling.

It was with some idea of this kind, that, about the year 1805, I threw together about one-third part of the first volume of Waverley. It was advertised to be published by the late Mr. John Ballantyne, bookseller in Edinburgh, under the name of "Waverley, or 'tis Fifty Years since,"—a title afterward altered to "'Tis Sixty Years since," that the actual date of publication might be made to correspond with the period in which the scene was laid. Having proceeded as far, I think, as the Seventh Chapter, I showed my work to a critical friend, whose opinion was unfavorable; and having then some poetical reputation, I was unwilling to risk the loss of it by attempting a new style of composition. I therefore threw aside the work I had commenced, without either reluctance or remonstrance. I ought to add, that though my ingenuous friend's sentence was afterward reversed, on an appeal to the public, it cannot be considered as any imputation on his good taste; for the specimen subjected to his criticism did not extend beyond the departure of the hero for Scotland, and, consequently, had not entered upon the part of the story which was finally found most interesting.

Be that as it may, this portion of the manuscript was

laid aside in the drawers of an old writing-desk, which, on my first coming to reside at Abbotsford, in 1811, was placed in a lumber-garret, and entirely forgotten. Thus, though I sometimes, among other literary avocations, turned my thoughts to the continuation of the romance which I had commenced, yet as I could not find what I had already written, after searching such repositories as were within my reach, and was too indolent to attempt to write it anew from memory, I as often laid aside all thoughts of that nature.

Two circumstances, in particular, recalled my recollection of the mislaid manuscript. The first was the extended and well-merited fame of Miss Edgeworth, whose Irish characters have gone so far to make the English familiar with the character of their gay and kind-hearted neighbors of Ireland, that she may be truly said to have done more towards completing the Union, than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up.

Without being so presumptuous as to hope to emulate the rich humor, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact, which pervade the works of my accomplished friend, I felt that something might be attempted for my own country, of the same kind with that which Miss Edgeworth so fortunately achieved for Ireland—something which might introduce her natives to those of the sister kingdom, in a more favorable light than they had been placed hitherto, and tend to procure sympathy for their virtues and indulgence for their foibles. I thought, also, that much of what I wanted in talent might be made up by the intimate acquaintance with the subject which I could lay claim to possess, as having travelled through most parts of Scotland, both Highland and Lowland; having been familiar with the elder, as well as more modern race; and having had from my infancy free and unrestrained communication with all ranks of my countrymen, from the Scottish peer to the Scottish plowman. Such ideas often occurred to me, and constituted an ambitious branch of

my theory, however far short I may have fallen of it in practice.

But it was not only the triumphs of Miss Edgeworth which worked in me emulation, and disturbed my indolence. I chanced actually to engage in a work which formed a sort of essay piece, and gave me hope that I might in time become free of the craft of Romance-writing, and be esteemed a tolerable workman.

In the year 1807–8, I undertook, at the request of John Murray, Esq. of Albemarle-street, to arrange for publication some posthumous productions of the late Mr. Joseph Strutt, distinguished as an artist and an antiquary, among which was an unfinished romance, entitled "Queen-Hoo-Hall." The scene of the tale was laid in the reign of Henry VI., and the work was written to illustrate the manners, customs, and language of the people of England during that period. The extensive acquaintance which Mr. Strutt had acquired with such subjects in compiling his laborious "Horda Angel Cynnan," his "Royal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities," and his "Essay on the Sports and Pastimes of the People of England," had rendered him familiar with all the antiquarian lore necessary for the purpose of composing the projected romance; and although the manuscript bore the marks of hurry and incoherence natural to the first rough draught of the author, it evinced (in my opinion) considerable powers of imagination.

As the work was unfinished, I deemed it my duty, as Editor, to supply such a hasty and inartificial conclusion as could be shaped out from the story, of which Mr. Strutt had laid the foundation. This concluding chapter* is also subjoined, for the reason already mentioned regarding the preceding fragment. It was a step in my advance towards romantic composition; and to preserve the traces of these is in a great measure the object of these remarks.

Queen-Hoo-Hall was not, however, very successful. I thought I was aware of the reason, and supposed that,

* See No. VII. of the Appendix.

by rendering his language too ancient, and displaying his antiquarian knowledge too liberally, the ingenious author had raised up an obstacle to his own success. Every work designed for mere amusement must be expressed in language easily comprehended; and when, as is sometimes the case in Queen-Hoo-Hall, the author addresses himself exclusively to the Antiquary, he must be content to be dismissed by the general reader with the criticism of Mungo, in the Padlock, on the Mauritanian music, "What signifies me hear, if me no understand?"

I conceived it possible to avoid this error; and by rendering a similar work more light and obvious to general comprehension, to escape the rock on which my predecessor was shipwrecked. But I was, on the other hand, so far discouraged by the indifferent reception of Mr. Strutt's romance, as to become satisfied that the manners of the middle ages did not possess the interest which I had conceived; and was led to form the opinion that a romance, founded on a Highland story, and more modern events, would have a better chance of popularity than a tale of chivalry. My thoughts, therefore, returned more than once to the tale which I had actually commenced, and accident at length threw the lost sheets in my way.

I happened to want some fishing-tackle for the use of a guest, when it occurred to me to search the old writing-desk already mentioned, in which I used to keep articles of that nature. I got access to it with some difficulty; and, in looking for lines and flies, the long-lost manuscript presented itself. I immediately set to work to complete it, according to my original purpose. And here I must frankly confess, that the mode in which I conducted the story scarcely deserved the success which the romance afterward attained. The tale of Waverley was put together with so little care, that I cannot boast of having sketched any distinct plan of the work. The whole adventures of Waverley, in his movements up and down the country with the Highland cateran Bean Lean, are managed without much skill. It suited best, however, the road

I wanted to travel, and permitted me to introduce some descriptions of scenery and manners, to which the reality gave an interest which the powers of the author might have otherwise failed to attain for them. And though I have been in other instances a sinner in this sort, I do not recollect any of these novels in which I have transgressed so widely as in the first of the series.

Among other unfounded reports, it has been said that the copyright of Waverley was, during the book's progress through the press, offered for sale to various booksellers in London at a very inconsiderable price. This was not the case. Messrs. Constable and Cadell, who published the work, were the only persons acquainted with the contents of the publication, and they offered a large sum for it while in the course of printing, which, however, was declined, the author not choosing to part with the copyright.

The origin of the story of Waverley, and the particular facts on which it is founded, have been already given to the public by my late lamented friend, William Erskine, Esq., (afterward Lord Kinnedder,) when reviewing the Tales of My Landlord for the Quarterly Review, in 1817. The particulars were derived by the critic from the author's information. Afterward they were published in the preface to the Chronicles of the Canongate.

The mutual protection afforded by Waverley and Talbot to each other, upon which the whole plot depends, is founded upon one of those anecdotes which soften the features even of civil war; and as it is equally honorable to the memory of both parties, I have no hesitation to give their names at length. When the Highlanders, on the morning of the battle of Preston, 1745, made their memorable attack on Sir John Cope's army, a battery of four field-pieces was stormed and carried by the Camerons and the Stewarts of Appine. The late Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle was one of the foremost in the charge, and observing an officer of the King's forces, who, scorning to join the flight of all around, remained with his sword in his hand, as if

determined to the very last to defend the post assigned to him, the Highland gentleman commanded him to surrender, and received for a reply a thrust, which he caught in his target. The officer was now defenceless, and the battle-ax of a gigantic Highlander (the miller of Invernahyle's mill) was uplifted to dash his brains out, when Mr. Stewart with difficulty prevailed on him to yield. He took charge of his enemy's property, protected his person, and finally obtained him liberty on his parole. The officer proved to be Colonel Whitefoord, an Ayrshire gentleman of high character and influence, and warmly attached to the house of Hanover; yet such was the confidence existing between these two honorable men, though of different political principles, that while the civil war was raging, and straggling officers from the Highland army were executed without mercy, Invernahyle hesitated not to pay his late captive a visit, as he returned to the Highlands to raise fresh recruits, on which occasion he spent a day or two in Ayrshire among Colonel Whitefoord's Whig friends, as pleasantly and as good-humoredly as if all had been at peace around him.

After the battle of Culloden had ruined the hopes of Charles Edward,* and dispersed his proscribed adherents, it was Colonel Whitefoord's turn to strain every nerve to obtain Mr. Stewart's pardon. He went to the Lord Justice Clerk, to the Lord Advocate, and to all the officers of state, and each application was answered by the production of a list, in which Invernahyle (as the good old gentleman was wont to express it) appeared "marked with the sign of the beast!" as a subject unfit for favor or pardon.

At length Colonel Whitefoord applied to the Duke of Cumberland in person. From him, also, he received a positive refusal. He then limited his request, for the present, to a protection for Stewart's house, wife, and children, and property. This was also refused by the Duke; on which Colonel Whitefoord, taking his commission from his bosom, laid it on the table before

* See No. VIII. of the Appendix.

his Royal Highness with much emotion, and asked permission to retire from the service of a sovereign who did not know how to spare a vanquished enemy. The Duke was struck, and even affected. He bade the Colonel take up his commission, and granted the protection he required. It was issued just in time to save the house, corn, and cattle at Invernahyle from the troops, who were engaged in laying waste what it was the fashion to call "the country of the enemy." A small encampment of soldiers was formed on Invernahyle's property, which they spared while plundering the country around, and searching in every direction for the leaders of the insurrection, and for Stewart in particular. He was much nearer them than they suspected; for, hidden in a cave, (like the Baron of Bradwardine,) he lay for many days so near the English sentinels, that he could hear their muster-roll called. His food was brought to him by one of his daughters, a child of eight years old, whom Mrs. Stewart was under the necessity of intrusting with this commission; for her own motions, and those of all her elder inmates, were closely watched. With ingenuity beyond her years, the child used to stray about among the soldiers, who were rather kind to her, and thus seize the moment when she was unobserved, and steal into the thicket, when she deposited whatever small store of provisions she had in charge, at some marked spot, where her father might find it. Invernahyle supported life for several weeks by means of these precarious supplies; and as he had been wounded in the battle of Culloden, the hardships which he endured were aggravated by great bodily pain. After the soldiers had removed their quarters, he had another remarkable escape.

As he now ventured to his own house at night, and left it in the morning, he was espied during the dawn by a party of the enemy, who fired at and pursued him. The fugitive being fortunate enough to escape their search, they returned to the house, and charged the family with harboring one of the proscribed traitors. An old woman had presence of mind enough to

maintain that the man they had seen was the shepherd. "Why did he not stop when we called to him?" said the soldier.—"He is as deaf, poor man, as a peat-stack," answered the ready-witted domestic.—"Let him be sent for directly." The real shepherd accordingly was brought from the hill, and as there was time to tutor him by the way, he was as deaf when he made his appearance, as was necessary to sustain his character. Invernahyle was afterward pardoned under the act of Indemnity.

I knew him well, and have often heard these circumstances from his own mouth. He was a noble specimen of the old Highlander, far descended, gallant, courteous, and brave, even to chivalry. He had been *out*, I believe, in 1715 and 1745, was an active partaker in all the stirring scenes which passed in the Highlands, between these memorable eras; and I have heard, was remarkable, among other exploits, for having fought a duel with the broadsword with the celebrated Rob Roy MacGregor, at the Clachan of Balquidder.

Invernahyle chanced to be in Edinburgh when Paul Jones came into the Frith of Forth, and though then an old man, I saw him in arms, and heard him exult, (to use his own words,) in the prospect of "drawing his claymore once more before he died." In fact, on that memorable occasion, when the capital of Scotland was menaced by three trifling sloops or brigs, scarce fit to have sacked a fishing village, he was the only man who seemed to propose a plan of resistance. He offered to the magistrates, if broadswords and dirks could be obtained, to find as many Highlanders among the lower classes, as would cut off any boat's crew who might be sent into a town, full of narrow and winding passages, in which they were like to disperse in quest of plunder. I know not if his plan was attended to; I rather think it seemed too hazardous to the constituted authorities, who might not, even at that time, desire to see arms in Highland hands. A steady and powerful west wind settled the matter, by sweeping Paul Jones and his vessels out of the Frith.

If there is something degrading in this recollection, it is not unpleasant to compare it with those of the last war, when Edinburgh, besides regular forces and militia, furnished a volunteer brigade of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, to the amount of six thousand men and upwards, which was in readiness to meet and repel a force of a far more formidable description, than was commanded by the adventurous American. Time and circumstances change the character of nations, and the fate of cities; and it is some pride to a Scotchman to reflect, that the independent and manly character of a country, willing to intrust its own protection to the arms of its children, after having been obscured for half a century, has, during the course of his own lifetime, recovered its lustre.

Waverley, of which I have thus recorded the origin, was published in 1814, and as the title-page was without the name of the author, the work was left to win its way in the world without any of the usual recommendations. Its progress was for some time slow; but after the first two or three months, its popularity had increased in a degree which must have satisfied the expectations of the author, had these been far more sanguine than he ever entertained.

Great anxiety was expressed to learn the name of the author, but on this no authentic information could be attained. My original motive for publishing the work anonymously, was the consciousness that it was an experiment on the public taste which might very probably fail, and therefore there was no occasion to take on myself the personal risk of discomfiture. For this purpose, considerable precautions were used to preserve secrecy. My old friend and schoolfellow, Mr. James Ballantyne, who printed my novels, had the exclusive task of corresponding with the author, who thus had not only the advantage of his professional talents, but also of his critical abilities. The original manuscript, or, as it is technically called, copy, was transcribed under Mr. Ballantyne's eye by confidential persons; nor was there an instance of treachery during the many years in which these precautions were re-

sorted to, although various individuals were employed at different times. Double proof-sheets were regularly printed off. One was forwarded to the author by Mr. Ballantyne, and the alterations which it received were, by his own hand, copied upon the other proof-sheet for the use of the printers, so that even the corrected proofs of the author were never seen in the printing-office; and thus the curiosity of such eager inquirers as made the most minute investigation, was entirely at fault.

But although the cause of concealing the author's name, in the first instance, when the reception of Waverley was doubtful, was natural enough, it is more difficult, it may be thought, to account for the same desire for secrecy during the subsequent editions, to the amount of between eleven and twelve thousand copies, which followed each other close, and proved the success of the work. I am sorry I can give little satisfaction to queries on this subject. I have already stated elsewhere, that I can render little better reason for choosing to remain anonymous, than by saying with Shylock, that such was my humor. It will be observed, that I had not the usual stimulus for desiring personal reputation, the desire, namely, to float amidst the conversation of men. Of literary fame, whether merited or undeserved, I had already as much as might have contented a mind more ambitious than mine; and in entering on this new contest for reputation, I might be said rather to endanger what I had, than to have any considerable chance of acquiring more. I was affected, too, by none of those motives which, at an earlier period of life, would doubtless have operated upon me. My friendships were formed,—my place in society fixed,—my life had attained its middle course. My condition in society was higher perhaps than I deserved, certainly as high as I wished, and there was scarce any degree of literary success which could have greatly altered or improved my personal condition.

I was not, therefore, touched by the spur of ambition, usually stimulating on such occasions; and yet I ought to stand exculpated from the charge of ungra-

cious or unbecoming indifference to public applause. I did not the less feel gratitude for the public favor, although I did not proclaim it,—as the lover who wears his mistress's favor in his bosom is as proud, though not so vain of possessing it, as another who displays the token of her grace upon his bonnet. Far from such an ungracious state of mind, I have seldom felt more satisfaction than when, returning from my pleasure voyage, I found Waverley in the zenith of popularity, and public curiosity in full cry after the name of the author. The knowledge that I had the public approbation, was like having the property of a hidden treasure, not less gratifying to the owner than if all the world knew that it was his own. Another advantage was connected with the secrecy which I observed. I could appear or retreat from the stage at pleasure, without attaacting any personal notice or attention, other than what might be founded on suspicion only. In my own person also, as a successful author in another department of literature, I might have been charged with too frequent intrusion on the public patience; but the Author of Waverley was in this respect as impassible to the critic as the Ghost of Hamlet to the partisan of Marcellus. Perhaps the curiosity of the public, irritated by the existence of a secret, and kept afloat by the discussions which took place on the subject from time to time, went a good way to maintain an unabated interest in these frequent publications. There was a mystery concerning the author, which each new novel was expected to assist in unravelling, although it might in other respects rank lower than its predecessors.

I may perhaps be thought guilty of affectation, should I allege as one reason of my silence, a secret dislike to enter on personal discussions concerning my own literary labors. It is in every case a dangerous intercourse for an author to be dwelling continually among those who make his writings a frequent and familiar subject of conversation, but who must necessarily be partial judges of works composed in their own society. The habits of self-importance, which are thus ac-

quired by authors, are highly injurious to a well-regulated mind; for the cup of flattery, if it does not, like that of Circe, reduce men to the level of beasts, is sure, if eagerly drained, to bring the best and the ablest down to that of fools. This risk was in some degree prevented by the mask which I wore; and my own stores of self-conceit were left to their natural course, without being enhanced by the partiality of friends, or adulation of flatterers.

If I am asked further reasons for the conduct I have long observed, I can only resort to the explanation supplied by a critic as friendly as he is intelligent; namely, that the mental organization of the Novelist must be characterized, to speak craniologically, by an extraordinary development of the passion for delitescency! I the rather suspect some natural disposition of this kind; for, from the instant I perceived the extreme curiosity manifested on the subject, I felt a secret satisfaction in baffling it, for which, when its unimportance is considered, I do not well know how to account.

My desire to remain concealed, in the character of the Author of the novels, subjected me occasionally to awkward embarrassments, as it sometimes happened that those who were sufficiently intimate with me, would put the question in direct terms. In this case, only one of three courses could be followed. Either I must have surrendered my secret,—or have returned an equivocating answer,—or, finally, must have stoutly and boldly denied the fact. The first was a sacrifice which I conceive no one had a right to force from me, since I alone was concerned in the matter. The alternative of rendering a doubtful answer must have left me open to the degrading suspicion that I was not unwilling to assume the merit (if there was any) which I dared not absolutely lay claim to; or those who might think more justly of me, must have received such an equivocal answer as an indirect avowal. I therefore considered myself entitled, like an accused person put upon trial, to refuse giving my own evidence to my own conviction, and flatly to deny all that could not b

proved against me. At the same time I usually qualified my denial by stating, that, had I been the author of these works, I would have felt myself quite entitled to protect my secret by refusing my own evidence, when it was asked for, to accomplish a discovery of what I desired to conceal.

The real truth is, that I never expected or hoped to disguise my connexion with the novels from any one who lived on terms of intimacy with me. The number of coincidences which necessarily existed between narratives recounted, modes of expression, and opinions broached in these Tales, and such as were used by their author in the intercourse of private life, must have been far too great to permit any of my familiar acquaintances to doubt the identity between their friend and the Author of Waverley; and, I believe, they were all morally convinced of it. But while I was myself silent, their belief could not weigh much more with the world than that of others; their opinions and reasoning were liable to be taxed with partiality, or confronted with opposing arguments and opinions; and the question was not so much, whether I should be generally acknowledged to be the author, in spite of my own denial, as whether even my own avowal of the works, if such should be made, would be sufficient to put me in undisputed possession of that character.

I have been often asked concerning supposed cases, in which I was said to have been placed on the verge of discovery; but, as I maintained my point with the composure of a lawyer of thirty years' standing, I never recollect being in pain or confusion on the subject. In Captain Medwyn's Conversations of Lord Byron, the reporter states himself to have asked my noble and highly-gifted friend, "If he was certain about these Novels being Sir Walter Scott's?" To which Lord Byron replied, "Scott as much as owned himself the Author of Waverley to me in Murray's shop. I was talking to him about that novel, and lamented that its author had not carried back the story nearer to the time of the Revolution. Scott, entirely off his guard, replied, 'Ay, I might have done so; but—' there he

stopped. It was in vain to attempt to correct himself; he looked confused, and relieved his embarrassment by a precipitate retreat." I have no recollection whatever of this scene taking place, and I should have thought that I was more likely to have laughed than to appear confused, for I certainly never hoped to impose upon Lord Byron in a case of the kind; and from the manner in which he uniformly expressed himself, I knew his opinion was entirely formed, and that any disclamations of mine would have only savored of affectation. I do not mean to insinuate that the incident did not happen, but only that it could hardly have occurred exactly under the circumstances narrated, without my recollecting something positive on the subject. In another part of the same volume, Lord Byron is reported to have expressed a supposition that the cause of my not avowing myself the Author of Waverley may have been some surmise that the reigning family would have been displeased with the work. I can only say, it is the last apprehension I should have entertained. The sufferers of that melancholy period have, during the last and present reign, been honored both with the sympathy and protection of the reigning family, whose magnanimity can well pardon a sigh from others, and bestow one themselves, to the memory of brave opponents, who did nothing in hate, but all in honor.

While those who were in habitual intercourse with the real author had little hesitation in assigning the literary property to him, others, and those critics of no mean rank, employed themselves in investigating, with persevering patience, any characteristic features which might seem to betray its origin. Among these, one gentleman, equally remarkable for the kind and liberal tone of his criticism, the acuteness of his reasoning, and the very gentlemanlike manner in which he conducted his inquiries, displayed not only powers of accurate investigation, but a temper of mind deserving to be employed on a subject of much greater importance; and I have no doubt made converts to his opinion of almost all who thought the point worthy of consider?

tion.* Of those letters, and other attempts of the same kind, the author could not complain, though his incognito was endangered. He had challenged the public to a game at bo-peep, and if he was discovered in his "hiding-hole," he must submit to the shame of detection.

Various reports were of course circulated in various ways; some founded on an inaccurate rehearsal of what may have been partly real, some on circumstances having no concern whatever with the subject, and others on the invention of some importunate persons, who might perhaps imagine, that the readiest mode of forcing the author to disclose himself was to assign some dishonorable and discreditable cause for his silence.

It may be easily supposed, that this sort of inquisition was treated with contempt by the person whom it principally regarded; as, among all the rumors that were current, there was only one, and that as unfounded as the others, which had nevertheless some alliance to probability, and indeed might have proved in some degree true.

I allude to a report which ascribed a great part, or the whole, of the novels to the late Thomas Scott, Esq., of the 70th regiment, then stationed in Canada. Those who remember that gentleman will readily grant, that, with general talents at least equal to those of his elder brother, he added a power of social humor, and a deep insight into human character, which rendered him a universally delightful member of society, and that the habit of composition alone was wanting to render him equally successful as a writer. The author of Waverley was so persuaded of the truth of this, that he warmly pressed his brother to make such an experiment, and willingly undertook all the trouble of correcting and superintending the press. Mr. Thomas Scott seemed at first very well disposed to embrace the proposal, and had even fixed on a subject and a hero. The latter

* Letters on the Author of Waverley; Rodwell and Martin, London, 1822.

was a person well known to both of us in our boyish years, from having displayed some strong traits of character. Mr. T. Scott had determined to represent his youthful acquaintance as emigrating to America, and encountering the dangers and hardships of the New World, with the same dauntless spirit which he had displayed when a boy in his native country. Mr. Scott would probably have been highly successful, being familiarly acquainted with the manners of the native Indians, of the old French settlers in Canada, and of the Brulés or Woodsmen, and having the power of observing with accuracy what, I have no doubt, he could have sketched with force and expression. In short, the author believes his brother would have made himself distinguished in that striking field, in which, since that period, Mr. Cooper has achieved so many triumphs. But Mr. T. Scott was already affected by bad health, which wholly unfitted him for literary labor, even if he could have reconciled his patience to the task. He never, I believe, wrote a single line of the projected work; and I only have the melancholy pleasure of preserving the following simple anecdote on which he proposed to found his tale.

"It is well known in the South that there is little or no boxing at the Scottish schools. About forty or fifty years ago, however, a far more dangerous mode of fighting, in parties or factions, was permitted in the streets of Edinburgh, to the great disgrace of the police, and danger of the parties concerned. These parties were generally formed from the quarters of the town in which the combatants resided, those of a particular square or district, fighting against those of an adjoining one. Hence it happened that the children of the higher classes were often pitted against those of the lower, each taking their side according to the residence of their friends. So far as I recollect, however, it was unmingled either with feelings of democracy, or aristocracy, or indeed with malice or ill-will of any kind towards the opposite party. In fact, it was only a rough mode of play. Such contests were, however maintained with great vigor with stones, and stick

and fisticuffs, when one party dared to charge and the other stood their ground. Of course, mischief sometimes happened; boys are said to have been killed at these *Bickers*, as they were called, and serious accidents certainly took place, as many contemporaries can bear witness.

The author's father, residing in George Square, in the southern side of Edinburgh, the boys belonging to that family, with others in the square, were arranged into a sort of company, to which a lady of distinction presented a handsome set of colors. Now this company or regiment, as a matter of course, was engaged in weekly warfare with the boys inhabiting the Cross-causeway, Bristo-street, the Potter-row,—in short, the neighboring suburbs. These last were chiefly of the lower rank, but hardy loons, who threw stones to a hair's-breadth, and were very rugged antagonists at close quarters. The skirmish sometimes lasted for a whole evening, until one party or the other was victorious, when, if ours were successful, we drove the enemy to their quarters, and were usually chased back by the reinforcement of bigger lads who came to their assistance. If, on the contrary, we were pursued, as was often the case, into the precincts of our square, we were in our turn supported by our elder brothers, domestic servants, and similar auxiliaries.

It followed, from our frequent opposition to each other, that though not knowing the names of our enemies, we were yet well acquainted with their appearance, and had nicknames for the most remarkable of them. One very active and spirited boy might be considered as the principal leader in the cohort of the suburbs. He was, I suppose, thirteen or fourteen years old, finely made, tall, blue-eyed, with long, fair hair, the very picture of a youthful Goth. This lad was always first in the charge, and last in the retreat—the Achilles, at once, and Ajax, of the Cross-causeway. He was too formidable to us not to have a cognomen, and, like that of a knight of old, it was taken from the most remarkable part of his dress, being a pair of old green livery breeches, which was the principal part of

his clothing; for, like Pentapolin, according to Don Quixote's account, Green-Breeks, as we called him, always entered the battle with bare arms, legs, and feet.

It fell, that once upon a time, when the combat was at the thickest, this plebeian champion headed a sudden charge, so rapid and furious, that all fled before him. He was several paces before his comrades, and had actually laid his hands on the patrician standard, when one of our party, whom some misjudging friend had intrusted with a *couteau de chasse*, or hanger, inspired with a zeal for the honor of the corps; worthy of Major Sturgeon himself, struck poor Green-Breeks over the head, with strength sufficient to cut him down. When this was seen, the casualty was so far beyond what had ever taken place before, that both parties fled different ways, leaving poor Green-Breeks, with his bright hair plentifully dabbled in blood, to the care of the watchman, who (honest man) took care not to know who had done the mischief. The bloody hanger was flung into one of the Meadow ditches, and solemn secrecy was sworn on all hands; but the remorse and terror of the actor were beyond all bounds, and his apprehensions of the most dreadful character. The wounded hero was for a few days in the Infirmary, the case being only a trifling one. But though inquiry was strongly pressed on him, no argument could make him indicate the person from whom he had received the wound, though he must have been perfectly well known to him. When he recovered, and was dismissed, the author and his brothers opened a communication with him, through the medium of a popular gingerbread-baker, of whom both parties were customers, in order to tender a subsidy in name of smart-money. The sum would excite ridicule were I to name it; but sure I am, that the pockets of the noted Green-Breeks never held as much money of his own. He declined the remittance, saying that he would not sell his blood; but at the same time reprobated the idea of being an informer, which he said was *clam*, *i. e.* base or mean. With much urgency he accepted a pound of snuff fr

the use of some old woman,—aunt, grandmother, or the like,—with whom he lived. We did not become friends, for the *bickers* were more agreeable to both parties than any more pacific amusement; but we conducted them ever after under mutual assurances of the highest consideration for each other.

Such was the hero whom Mr. Thomas Scott proposed to carry to Canada, and involve in adventures with the natives and colonists of that country. Perhaps the youthful generosity of the lad will not seem so great in the eyes of others, as to those whom it was the means of screening from severe rebuke and punishment. But it seemed to those concerned, to argue a nobleness of sentiment far beyond the pitch of most minds; and however obscurely the lad, who showed such a frame of noble spirit, may have lived or died, I cannot help being of opinion, that if fortune had placed him in circumstances calling for gallantry or generosity, the man would have fulfilled the promises of the boy. Long afterward, when the story was told to my father, he censured us severely for not telling the truth at the time, that he might have attempted to be of use to the young man in entering on life. But our alarms for the consequences of the drawn sword, and the wound inflicted with such a weapon, were far too predominant at the time for such a pitch of generosity.

Perhaps I ought not to have inserted the schoolboy tale; but, besides the strong impression made by the incident at the time, the whole accompaniments of the story are matters to me of solemn and sad recollection. Of all the little band who were concerned in those juvenile sports or brawls, I can scarce recollect a single survivor. Some left the ranks of mimic war to die in the active service of their country. Many sought distant lands to return no more. Others, dispersed in different paths of life, "my dim eyes now seek for in vain." Of five brothers, all healthy and promising, in a degree far beyond one whose infancy was visited by personal infirmity, and whose health after this period seemed long very precarious, I am, nevertheless, the

only survivor. The best loved, and the best deserving to be loved, who had destined this incident to be the foundation of literary composition, died "before his day," in a distant and foreign land; and trifles assume an importance not their own, when connected with those who have been loved and lost.

To these circumstances I may add, I can easily conceive that there may have been others which gave a color to the general report of my brother being interested in the works in question; and in particular that it might derive strength from my having occasion to remit to him, in consequence of certain family transactions, some considerable sums of money about that period. To which it is to be added, that if any person chanced to evince particular curiosity on such a subject, my brother was likely enough to divert himself with practising on their credulity.

It may be mentioned, that while the paternity of the novels was from time to time warmly disputed in Britain, the foreign booksellers expressed no hesitation on the matter, but affixed my name to the whole of the novels, and to some besides to which I had no claim.

The novels, therefore, to which I allude, are entirely the composition of the author by whom they have been acknowledged, with the exception, always, of avowed quotations, and such unpremeditated and involuntary plagiarisms as can scarce be guarded against by any one who has read and written a great deal. The original manuscripts are all in existence, and entirely written (*horresco referens*) in the author's own hand, excepting during the years 1818 and 1819, when, being affected with severe illness, he was obliged to employ the assistance of a friendly amanuensis.

The number of persons to whom the secret was necessarily intrusted, or communicated by chance, amounted I should think to twenty at least, to whom I am greatly obliged for the fidelity with which they observed their trust, until the derangement of the affairs of my publishers, Messrs. Constable and Co., and the exposure of their accompt-books, which was the necessary consequence, rendered secrecy no longer

possible. The disclosure, however, which I was obliged to make, certainly was not a voluntary experiment; for it was my original intention never to have avowed the works during my lifetime, and the original manuscripts were carefully preserved (though by the care of others rather than mine) with the purpose of supplying the necessary evidence of the truth, when the period of announcing it should arrive.

All who are acquainted with the early history of the Italian stage, are aware that Arlechino is not, in his original conception, a mere worker of marvels with his wooden sword, a jumper into and out of windows, as upon our theatre, but, as his party-colored jacket implies, a buffoon or clown, whose mouth, far from being eternally closed, as amongst us, is filled, like that of Touchstone, with quips, and cranks, and witty devices, very often delivered extempore. It is not easy to guess how he became possessed of his black vizard, which was anciently made in the resemblance of the face of a cat; but it seems that the mask was essential to the performance of the character, as will appear from the following theatrical anecdote:—

An actor on the Italian stage permitted at the Foire du St. Germaine, in Paris, was renowned for the wild, venturous, and extravagant wit, the brilliant sallies and fortunate repartees, with which he prodigally seasoned the character of the party-colored jester. Some critics, whose good-will towards a favorite actor was stronger than their judgment, took occasion to remonstrate with the successful performer on the subject of the grotesque vizard. They went wilily to their purpose, observing that his classical and attic wit, his delicate vein of humor, his happy turn for dialogue, was rendered burlesque and ludicrous by this unmeaning and bizarre disguise, and that those attributes would become far more impressive, if aided by the spirit of his eye and the expression of his natural features. The actor's vanity was easily so far engaged as to induce him to make the experiment. He played Harlequin barefaced, but was considered on all hands as having made a total failure. He had lost the audacity

which a sense of incognito bestowed, and with it all the reckless play of raillery which gave vivacity to his original acting. He cursed his advisers, and resumed his grotesque vizard; but, it is said, without ever being able to regain the careless and successful levity which the consciousness of the disguise had formerly bestowed.

Perhaps I incurred a risk of the same kind, and endangered my popularity by laying aside my incognito. But the affairs of my publishers, having, as I have mentioned, unfortunately passed into a management different from their own, I had no right any longer to rely upon secrecy in that quarter; and thus my mask, like my Aunt Dinah's in Tristram Shandy, having begun to wax a little threadbare about the chin, it became time to lay it aside with a good grace, unless I desired it should fall in pieces from my face.

Yet I had not the slightest intention of choosing the time and place in which the disclosure was finally made; nor was there any concert betwixt my learned and respected friend Lord Meadowbank and myself upon that occasion. It was, as the reader is probably aware, upon the 23d February, 1827, at a public meeting, called for establishing a professional Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, that the communication took place. Just before we sat down to table, Lord Meadowbank asked me, whether I was still anxious to preserve my incognito on the subject of what were called the Waverley Novels? I did not immediately see the purpose of his Lordship's question, although I certainly might have been led to infer it, and replied, that the secret had now become known to so many people that I was indifferent on the subject. Lord Meadowbank was thus induced, while doing me the great honor of proposing my health to the meeting, to say something on the subject of the novels, so strongly connecting them with me as the author, that, by remaining silent, I must have stood convicted, either of the actual paternity, or of the still greater crime of being supposed willing to receive indirectly praise to which I had no just title. I thus found myself suddenly

unexpectedly placed in the confessional, and had only time to recollect that I had been guided thither by a most friendly hand, and could not, perhaps, find a better public opportunity to lay down a disguise, which began to resemble that of a detected masquerader. I had therefore the task of avowing myself, to the numerous and respectable company assembled, as the sole and unaided author of the Novels of Waverley, the paternity of which was likely at one time to have formed a controversy of some celebrity.

I think it necessary to say, however, that while I take on myself all the merits and demerits attending those compositions, I am bound to acknowledge with gratitude, hints of subjects and legends which I received from various quarters, and occasionally used as a foundation of my fictitious compositions, or wove up with them in the shape of episodes. I am bound, in particular, to acknowledge the unremitting kindness of Mr. Joseph Train, supervisor of excise at Dumfries, to whose unwearied industry I have been indebted for many curious traditions and points of antiquarian interest. It was Mr. Train who recalled to my recollection the history of Old Mortality, although I myself had a personal interview with that celebrated wanderer so far back as about 1792, when I found him on his usual task. He was then engaged in repairing the grave-stones of the Covenanters who had died while imprisoned in the Castle of Dunnottar, to which many of them were committed prisoners at the period of Argyle's rising; their place of confinement is still called the Whigs' Vault. Mr. Train, however, procured for me far more extensive information concerning this singular person, whose name was Patterson, than I had been able to acquire during my short conversation with him. He was (as I may have somewhere already stated,) a native of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfries-shire, and it is believed that domestic affliction, as well as devotional feeling, induced him to commence the wandering mode of life, which he pursued for a very long period. It is more than twenty years since Robert Patterson's death, which took place on the high-road near Locker-

by, where he was found exhausted and expiring. The white pony, the companion of his pilgrimage, was standing by the side of its dying master; the whole furnishing a scene not unfitted for the pencil. These particulars I had from Mr. Train.*

Another debt, which I pay most willingly, is that which I owe to an unknown correspondent, (a lady,) who favored me with the history of the upright and high-principled female, whom, in the Heart of Midlothian, I have termed Jeanie Deans. The circumstance of her refusing to save her sister's life by an act of perjury, and undertaking a pilgrimage to London to obtain her pardon, are both represented as true by my fair and obliging correspondent; and they led me to consider the possibility of rendering a fictitious personage interesting by mere dignity of mind and rectitude of principle, assisted by unpretending good sense and temper, without any of the beauty, grace, talent, accomplishment, and wit, to which a heroine of romance is supposed to have a prescriptive right. If the portrait was received with interest by the public, I am conscious how much it was owing to the truth and force of the original sketch, which I regret that I am unable to present to the public, as it was written with much feeling and spirit.†

Old and odd books, and a considerable collection of family legends, formed another quarry, so ample, that it was much more likely that the strength of the laborer should be exhausted, than that materials should fail. I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of the Bride of Lammermoor, actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. The female relative, by whom the melancholy tale was communicated to me many years since, was a near connexion of the family in which the event happened, and always told it with an appearance of melancholy mystery, which enhanced the interest. She had known, in her youth, the brother who rode before the unhappy

* See No. IX. of the Appendix.

† See No. X. of the Appendix.

victim to the fatal altar, who, though then a mere boy, and occupied almost entirely with the gallantry of his own appearance in the bridal procession, could not but remark that the hand of his sister was moist, and cold as that of a statue. It is unnecessary further to withdraw the veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to say, that the events are imitated; but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters of the persons concerned in the real story.*

Indeed, I may here state generally, that although I have deemed historical personages free subjects of delineation, I have never on any occasion violated the respect due to private life. It was indeed impossible that traits proper to persons, both living and dead, with whom I have had intercourse in society, should not have risen to my pen in such works as Waverley, and those which followed it. But I have always studied to generalize the portraits, so that they should still seem, on the whole, the productions of fancy, though possessing some resemblance to real individuals. Yet I must own my attempts have not in this last particular been uniformly successful. There are men whose characters are so peculiarly marked, that the delineation of some leading and principal feature, inevitably places the whole person before you in his individuality. Thus, the character of Jonathan Oldbuck, in the Antiquary, was partly founded on that of an old friend of my youth, to whom I am indebted for introducing me to Shakspeare, and other invaluable favors; but I thought I had so completely disguised the likeness, that it could not be recognized by any one now alive. I was mistaken, however, and indeed had endangered what I desired should be considered as a secret; for I afterwards learned that a highly respectable gentleman, one of the few surviving friends of my father,

* See No. XI. of the Appendix.

and an acute critic, had said, upon the appearance of the work, that he was now convinced who was the author of it, as he recognized, in the Antiquary, traces of the character of a very intimate friend of my father's family. The reader is not to suppose, however, that my late respected friend resembled Mr. Oldbuck, either in his pedigree, or the history imputed to the ideal personage. There is not a single incident in the Novel which is borrowed from his real circumstances, excepting the fact that he resided in an old house near a flourishing seaport, and that the author chanced to witness a scene betwixt him and the female proprietor of a stage-coach, very similar to that which commences the history of the Antiquary. An excellent temper, with a slight degree of subacid humor; learning, wit, and drollery, the more poignant that they were a little marked by the peculiarities of an old bachelor; a soundness of thought, rendered more forcible by an occasional quaintness of expression, were, I conceive, the only qualities in which the creature of my imagination resembled my benevolent and excellent old friend.

In delineating the character of the beggar, Edie Ochiltree, who performs so prominent a part in the same narrative, I may add, that the individual I had in my eye was Andrew Gemmells, an old mendicant of the character described, who was many years since well known, and must still be remembered, in the vales of Gala, Tweed, Ettrick, Yarrow, and the adjoining country.

I have in my youth repeatedly seen and conversed with Andrew, but cannot recollect whether he held the rank of Blue-Gown. He was a remarkably fine old figure, very tall, and maintaining a soldierlike, or military manner and address. His features were intelligent, with a powerful expression of sarcasm. His motions were always so graceful, that he might almost have been suspected of having studied them; for he might, on any occasion, have served as a model for an artist, so remarkably striking were his ordinary attitudes. Andrew Gemmells had little of the cant of his calling; his wants were food and shelter, or a trifle o

money, which he always claimed, and seemed to receive, as his due. He sung a good song, told a good story, and could crack a severe jest with all the acumen of Shakspeare's jesters, though without using, like them, the cloak of insanity. It was some fear of Andrew's satire, as much as a feeling of kindness or charity, which secured him the general good reception which he enjoyed everywhere. In fact, a jest of Andrew Gemmells, especially at the expense of a person of consequence, flew round the circle which he frequented, as surely as the bon-mot of a man of established character for wit glides through the fashionable world. Many of his good things are held in remembrance, but are generally too local and personal to be introduced here.

Andrew had a character peculiar to himself among his tribe, for aught I ever heard. He was ready and willing to play at cards or dice with any one who desired such amusement. This was more in the character of the Irish itinerant gambler, called in that country a *carrow*, than of the Scottish beggar. But the late Reverend Dr. Robert Douglas, minister of Galashiels, assured me that the last time he saw Andrew Gemmells, he was engaged in a game at brag with a gentleman of fortune, distinction, and birth. To preserve the due gradations of rank, the party was made at an open window of the chateau, the laird sitting on his chair in the inside, the beggar on a stool in the yard; and they played on the window-sill. The stake was a considerable parcel of silver. The author expressing some surprise, Dr. Douglas observed, that the laird was no doubt a humorist or original; but that many decent persons in those times would, like him, have thought there was nothing extraordinary in passing an hour, either in card-playing or conversation, with Andrew Gemmells.

This singular mendicant had generally, or was supposed to have, as much money about his person as would have been thought the value of his life among modern foot-pads. On one occasion, a country gentleman, generally esteemed a very narrow man, happen-

ing to meet Andrew, expressed great regret that he had no silver in his pocket, or he would have given him sixpence:—"I can give you change for a note, laird," replied Andrew.

Like most who have arisen to the head of their profession, the modern degradation which mendicity has undergone was often the subject of Andrew's lamentations. As a trade, he said, it was forty pounds a-year worse since he had first practised it. On another occasion he observed, begging was in modern times scarcely the profession of a gentleman, and that if he had twenty sons, he would not easily be induced to breed one of them up in his own line. When or where this *laudator temporis acti* closed his wanderings, I never heard with certainty; but most probably, as Burns says,

"—— he died a cadger-powny's death
At some dike side."

I may add another picture of the same kind as Edie Ochiltree and Andrew Gemmells. The author's contemporaries at the university of Edinburgh will probably remember the thin wasted form of a venerable old Bedesman, who stood by the Potter-row port, now demolished, and, without speaking a syllable, gently inclined his head, and offered his hat, but with the least possible degree of urgency, towards each individual who passed. This man gained, by silence and the extenuated and wasted appearance of a palmer from a remote country, the same tribute which was yielded to Andrew Gemmell's sarcastic humor and stately deportment. He was understood to be able to maintain a son a student in the theological classes of the University, at the gate of which the father was a mendicant. The young man was modest and inclined to learning, so that a student of the same age, and whose parents were rather of the lower order, moved by seeing him excluded from the society of other scholars when the secret of his birth was suspected, endeavored to console him by offering him some occasional civilities. The old mendicant was grateful for this attention to his son, and one day, as the friendly student passed

he stooped forward more than usual, as if to intercept his passage. The scholar drew out a halfpenny, which he concluded was the beggar's object, when he was surprised to receive his thanks for the kindness he had shown to Jemmie, and at the same time a cordial invitation to dine with them next Saturday, "on a shoulder of mutton and potatoes," adding, "ye'll put on your clean sark, as I have company." The student was strongly tempted to accept this hospitable proposal, as many in his place would probably have done; but, as the motive might have been capable of misrepresentation, he thought it most prudent, considering the character and circumstances of the old man, to decline the invitation.

These traits of Scottish mendicity, may serve to throw light on a Novel in which a character of that description plays a prominent part. We conclude, that we have vindicated Edie Ochiltree's right to the importance assigned him; and have shown, that we have known one beggar take a hand at cards with a person of distinction, and another give dinner parties.

I know not if it be worth while to observe, that the Antiquary was not so well received on its first appearance as either of its predecessors, though, in course of time, it rose to equal, and, with some readers, superior popularity.

The manner, indeed, in which the novels were composed cannot be better illustrated than by reciting the simple narrative on which Guy Mannering was originally founded; but to which, in the progress of the work, the production ceased to bear any, even the most distant resemblance. The tale was originally told me by an old servant of my father's, an excellent old Highlander, without a fault, unless a preference to mountain-dew over less potent liquors be accounted one. He believed as firmly in the story, as in any part of his creed.

A grave and elderly person, according to old John MacKinlay's account, while travelling in the wilder parts of Galloway, was benighted. With difficulty he found his way to a country-seat, where, with the hos-

pitality of the time and country, he was readily admitted. The owner of the house, a gentleman of good fortune, was much struck by the reverend appearance of his guest, and apologized to him for a certain degree of confusion which must unavoidably attend his reception, and could not escape his eye. The lady of the house was, he said, confined to her apartment, and on the point of making her husband a father for the first time, though they had been ten years married. At such an emergency, the Laird said, he feared his guest might meet with some apparent neglect.

"Not so, sir," said the stranger; "my wants are few, and easily supplied, and I trust the present circumstances may even afford an opportunity of showing my gratitude for your hospitality. Let me only request that I may be informed of the exact minute of the birth; and I hope to be able to put you in possession of some particulars, which may influence, in an important manner, the future prospects of the child now about to come into this busy and changeful world. I will not conceal from you that I am skilful in understanding and interpreting the movements of those planetary bodies which exert their influence on the destiny of mortals. It is a science which I do not practise, like others who call themselves astrologers, for hire or reward; for I have a competent estate, and only use the knowledge I possess for the benefit of those in whom I feel an interest." The Laird bowed in respect and gratitude, and the stranger was accommodated with an apartment which commanded an ample view of the astral regions.

The guest spent a part of the night in ascertaining the position of the heavenly bodies, and calculating their probable influence; until at length the result of his observations induced him to send for the father, and conjure him, in the most solemn manner, to cause the assistants to retard the birth, if practicable, were it but for five minutes. The answer declared this to be impossible; and almost in the instant that the message was returned, the father and his guest were made acquainted with the birth of a boy.

The Astrologer on the morrow met the party who gathered around the breakfast table, with looks so grave and ominous, as to alarm the fears of the father, who had hitherto exulted in the prospects held out by the birth of an heir to his ancient property, failing which event it must have passed to a different branch of the family. He hastened to draw the stranger into a private room.

"I fear from your looks," said the father, "that you have bad tidings to tell me of my young stranger; perhaps God will resume the blessing he has bestowed ere he attains the age of manhood, or perhaps he is destined to be unworthy of the affection which we are naturally disposed to devote to our offspring."

"Neither the one nor the other," answered the stranger; "unless my judgment greatly err, the infant will survive the years of minority, and in temper and disposition will prove all that his parents can wish. But with much in his horoscope which promises many blessings, there is one evil influence strongly predominant, which threatens to subject him to an unhallowed and unhappy temptation about the time when he shall attain the age of twenty-one, which period, the constellations intimate, will be the crisis of his fate. In what shape, or with what peculiar urgency, this temptation may beset him, my art cannot discover."

"Your knowledge, then, can afford us no defence," said the anxious father, "against the threatened evil?"

"Pardon me," answered the stranger, "it can. The influence of the constellations is powerful: but He, who made the heavens, is more powerful than all, if his aid be invoked in sincerity and truth. You ought to dedicate this boy to the immediate service of his Maker, with as much sincerity as Samuel was devoted to the worship in the Temple by his parents. You must regard him as a being separated from the rest of the world. In childhood, in boyhood, you must surround him with the pious and virtuous, and protect him, to the utmost of your power, from the sight or hearing of any crime, in word or action. He must be educated in religious and moral principles of the strictest de-

scription. Let him not enter the world, lest he learn to partake of its follies, or perhaps of its vices. In short, preserve him as far as possible from all sin, save that of which too great a portion belongs to all the fallen race of Adam. With the approach of his twenty-first birthday comes the crisis of his fate. If he survive it, he will be happy and prosperous on earth, and a chosen vessel among those elected for heaven. But if it be otherwise"——The Astrologer stopped, and sighed deeply.

"Sir," replied the parent, still more alarmed than before, "your words are so kind, your advice so serious, that I will pay the deepest attention to your behests; but can you not aid me farther in this most important concern? Believe me, I will not be ungrateful."

"I require and deserve no gratitude for doing a good action," said the stranger, "in especial for contributing all that lies in my power to save from an abhorred fate the harmless infant to whom, under a singular conjunction of planets, last night gave life. There is my address; you may write to me from time to time concerning the progress of the boy in religious knowledge. If he be bred up as I advise, I think it will be best that he come to my house at the time when the fatal and decisive period approaches, that is, before he has attained his twenty-first year complete. If you send him such as I desire, I humbly trust that God will protect his own, through whatever strong temptation his fate may subject him to." He then gave his host his address, which was a country-seat near a post-town in the south of England, and bid him an affectionate farewell.

The mysterious stranger departed, but his words remained impressed upon the mind of the anxious parent. He lost his lady while his boy was still in infancy. This calamity, I think, had been predicted by the Astrologer; and thus his confidence, which, like most people of the period, he had freely given to the science, was riveted and confirmed. The utmost care, therefore, was taken to carry into effect the severe ar-

almost ascetic plan of education which the sage had enjoined. A tutor of the strictest principles was employed to superintend the youth's education; he was surrounded by domestics of the most established character, and closely watched and looked after by the anxious father himself.

The years of infancy, childhood, and boyhood, passed as the father could have wished. A young Nazarene could not have been bred up with more rigor. All that was evil was withheld from his observation—he only heard what was pure in precept—he only witnessed what was worthy in practice.

But when the boy began to be lost in the youth, the attentive father saw cause for alarm. Shades of sadness, which gradually assumed a darker character, began to overcloud the young man's temper. Tears, which seemed involuntary, broken sleep, moonlight wanderings, and a melancholy for which he could assign no reason, seemed to threaten at once his bodily health, and the stability of his mind. The Astrologer was consulted by letter, and returned for answer, that this fitful state of mind was but the commencement of his trial, and that the poor youth must undergo more and more desperate struggles with the evil that assailed him. There was no hope of remedy, save that he showed steadiness of mind in the study of the Scriptures. "He suffers," continued the letter of the sage, "from the awakening of those harpies, the passions, which have slept with him as with others, till the period of life which he has now attained. Better, far better, that they torment him by ungrateful cravings, than that he should have to repent having satiated them by criminal indulgence."

The dispositions of the young man were so excellent, that he combated, by reason and religion, the fits of gloom which at times overcast his mind, and it was not till he attained the commencement of his twenty-first year, that they assumed a character which made his father tremble for the consequences. It seemed as if the gloomiest and most hideous of mental maladies was taking the form of religious despair. Still

the youth was gentle, courteous, affectionate, and submissive to his father's will, and resisted with all his power the dark suggestions which were breathed into his mind, as it seemed, by some emanation of the Evil Principle, exhorting him, like the wicked wife of Job, to curse God and die.

The time at length arrived when he was to perform what was then thought a long and somewhat perilous journey, to the mansion of the early friend who had calculated his nativity. His road lay through several places of interest, and he enjoyed the amusement of travelling, more than he himself thought would have been possible. Thus he did not reach the place of his destination till noon, on the day preceding his birthday. It seemed as if he had been carried away with an unwonted tide of pleasurable sensation, so as to forget, in some degree, what his father had communicated concerning the purpose of his journey. He halted at length before a respectable but solitary old mansion, to which he was directed as the abode of his father's friend.

The servants who came to take his horse, told him he had been expected for two days. He was led into a study, where the stranger, now a venerable old man, who had been his father's guest, met him with a shade of displeasure, as well as gravity, on his brow. "Young man," he said, "wherefore so slow on a journey of such importance?"—"I thought," replied the guest, blushing and looking downward, "that there was no harm in travelling slowly, and satisfying my curiosity, providing I could reach your residence by this day; for such was my father's charge."—"You were to blame," replied the sage, "in lingering, considering that the avenger of blood was pressing on your footsteps. But you are come at last, and we will hope for the best, though the conflict in which you are to be engaged will be found more dreadful, the longer it is postponed. But first, accept of such refreshments as nature requires, to satisfy, but not to pamper, the appetite.

The old man led the way into a summer parlor, where a frugal meal was placed on the table. As they

sat down to the board, they were joined by a young lady about eighteen years of age, and so lovely, that the sight of her carried off the feeling of the young stranger from the peculiarity and mystery of his own lot, and riveted his attention to every thing she did or said. She spoke little, and it was on the most serious subjects. She played on the harpsichord at her father's command, but it was hymns with which she accompanied the instrument. At length, on a sign from the sage, she left the room, turning on the young stranger, as she departed, a look of inexpressible anxiety and interest.

The old man then conducted the youth to his study, and conversed with him upon the most important points of religion, to satisfy himself that he could render a reason for the faith that was in him. During the examination, the youth, in spite of himself, felt his mind occasionally wander, and his recollections go in quest of the beautiful vision who had shared their meal at noon. On such occasions, the Astrologer looked grave, and shook his head at this relaxation of attention; yet, on the whole, he was pleased with the youth's replies.

At sunset the young man was made to take the bath; and, having done so, he was directed to attire himself in a robe, somewhat like that worn by Armenians, having his long hair combed down on his shoulders, and his neck, hands, and feet bare. In this guise, he was conducted into a remote chamber totally devoid of furniture, excepting a lamp, a chair, and a table, on which lay a Bible. "Here," said the Astrologer, "I must leave you alone, to pass the most critical period of your life. If you can, by recollection of the great truths of which we have spoken, repel the attacks which will be made on your courage and your principles, you have nothing to apprehend. But the trial will be severe and arduous." His features then assumed a pathetic solemnity, the tears stood in his eyes, and his voice faltered with emotion as he said, "Dear child, at whose coming into the world I fore-

saw this fatal trial, may God give thee grace to support it with firmness!"

The young man was left alone; and hardly did he find himself so, when, like a swarm of demons, the recollection of all his sins of omission and commission, rendered even more terrible by the scrupulousness with which he had been educated, rushed on his mind, and, like furies armed with fiery scourges, seemed determined to drive him to despair. As he combated these horrible recollections with distracted feelings, but with a resolved mind, he became aware that his arguments were answered by the sophistry of another, and that the dispute was no longer confined to his own thoughts. The Author of Evil was present in the room with him in bodily shape, and, potent with spirits of a melancholy cast, was impressing upon him the desperation of his state, and urging suicide as the readiest mode to put an end to his sinful career. Amid his errors, the pleasure he had taken in prolonging his journey unnecessarily, and the attention which he had bestowed on the beauty of the fair female, when his thoughts ought to have been dedicated to the religious discourse of her father, were set before him in the darkest colors; and he was treated as one who, having sinned against light, was, therefore, deservedly left a prey to the Prince of Darkness.

As the fated and influential hour rolled on, the terrors of the hateful Presence grew more confounding to the mortal senses of the victim, and the knot of the accursed sophistry became more inextricable in appearance, at least to the prey whom its meshes surrounded. He had not power to explain the assurance of pardon which he continued to assert, or to name the victorious name in which he trusted. But his faith did not abandon him, though he lacked for a time the power of expressing it. "Say what you will," was his answer to the Tempter; "I know there is as much betwixt the two boards of this Book as can insure me forgiveness for my transgressions, and safety for my soul." As he spoke, the clock, which announced the lapse of the fatal hour, was heard to strike. The speech s

intellectual powers of the youth were instantly and fully restored; he burst forth into prayer, and expressed, in the most glowing terms, his reliance on the truth, and on the Author, of the gospel. The demon retired, yelling and discomfited, and the old man, entering the apartment, with tears congratulated his guest on his victory in the fatal struggle.

The young man was afterwards married to the beautiful maiden, the first sight of whom had made such an impression on him, and they were consigned over at the close of the story to domestic happiness.—So ended John MacKinlay's legend.

I had imagined a possibility of framing an interesting, and perhaps not an unedifying, tale, out of the incidents of the life of a doomed individual, whose efforts at good and virtuous conduct were to be for ever disappointed by the intervention, as it were, of some malevolent being, and who was at last to come off victorious from the fearful struggle. In short, I meditated something upon a plan resembling the imaginative tale of Sintram and his Companions, by Mons. Le Baron de la Motte Fouqué, although, if it then existed, I had not seen it.

The scheme projected may be traced in the three or four first chapters of the work, but farther consideration induced me to lay my purpose aside. It appeared to me, on mature consideration, that Astrology, though its influence was once received and admitted by Bacon himself, does not now retain influence over the general mind sufficient even to constitute the mainspring of a romance. Besides, it occurred, that to do justice to such a subject would have required not only more talent than the author could be conscious of possessing, but also involved doctrines and discussions of a nature too serious for his purpose, and for the character of the narrative. In changing his plan, however, which was done in the course of printing, the early sheets retained the vestiges of the original tenor of the story, although they now hang upon it as an unnecessary and unnatural encumbrance. The cause of

such vestiges occurring is now explained, and apologized for.

It is here worthy of observation, that while astrological doctrines have fallen into general contempt, and been supplanted by superstitions of a more gross and far less beautiful character, they have, even in modern days, retained some votaries.

One of the most remarkable believers in that forgotten and despised science, was a late eminent professor of the art of legerdemain. One would have thought that a person of this description ought, from his knowledge of the thousand ways in which human eyes could be deceived, to have been less than others subject to the fantasies of superstition. Perhaps the habitual use of those abstruse calculations, by which, in a manner surprising to the artist himself, many tricks upon cards, &c., are performed, induced this gentleman to study the combination of the stars and planets, with the expectation of obtaining prophetic communications.

He constructed a scheme of his own nativity, calculated according to such rules of art as he could collect from the best astrological authors. The result of the past he found agreeable to what had hitherto befallen him, but in the important prospect of the future a singular difficulty occurred. There were two years, during the course of which he could by no means obtain any exact knowledge, whether the subject of the scheme would be dead or alive. Anxious concerning so remarkable a circumstance, he gave the scheme to a brother Astrologer, who was also baffled in the same manner. At one period he found the native, or subject, was certainly alive; at another, that he was unquestionably dead; but a space of two years extended between these two terms, during which he could find no certainty as to his death or existence.

The Astrologer marked the remarkable circumstance in his Diary, and continued his exhibitions in various parts of the empire until the period was about to expire, during which his existence had been warranted as actually ascertained. At last, while he was exhibiting to a numerous audience his usual tricks of leger-

demain, the hands, whose activity had so often baffled the closest observer, suddenly lost their power, the cards dropped from them, and he sunk down a disabled paralytic. In this state the artist languished for two years, when he was at length removed by death. It is said that the Diary of this modern Astrologer will soon be given to the public.

The fact, if truly reported, is one of those singular coincidences which occasionally appear, differing so widely from ordinary calculation, yet without which irregularities, human life would not present to mortals, looking into futurity, the abyss of impenetrable darkness, which it is the pleasure of the Creator it should offer to them. Were every thing to happen in the ordinary train of events, the future would be subject to the rules of arithmetic, like the chances of gaming. But extraordinary events, and wonderful runs of luck, defy the calculations of mankind, and throw impenetrable darkness on future contingencies.

To the above anecdote, another, still more recent, may be here added. The author was lately honored with a letter from a gentleman deeply skilled in these mysteries, who kindly undertook to calculate the nativity of the writer of Guy Mannering, who might be supposed to be friendly to the divine art which he professed. But it was impossible to supply data for the construction of a horoscope, had the native been otherwise desirous of it, since all those who could supply the minutiæ of day, hour, and minute, have been long removed from the mortal sphere.

The individual gipsy upon whom the character of Meg Merrilies was founded, was well known about the middle of the last century, by the name of Jean Gordon, an inhabitant of the village of Kirk Yetholm, in the Cheviot hills, adjoining to the English Border. Some account of this remarkable person may be found in one of the early Numbers of Blackwood's Magazine, for which it was written by the author of Waverley.*

To pass to a character of a very different descrip-

* Vol. I. p. 54.

tion, Dominie Sampson, the reader may easily suppose that a poor, modest, humble scholar, who has won his way through the classics, yet has fallen to leeward in the voyage of life, is no uncommon personage in a country, where a certain portion of learning is easily attained by those who are willing to suffer hunger and thirst in exchange for acquiring Greek and Latin. But there is a far more exact prototype of the worthy Dominie, upon which is founded the part which he performs in the romance, and which, for certain particular reasons, must be expressed very generally.

Such a preceptor as Mr. Sampson is supposed to have been, was actually tutor in the family of a gentleman of considerable property. The young lads, his pupils, grew up and went out in the world, but the tutor continued to reside in the family, no uncommon circumstance in Scotland, (in former days,) where food and shelter were readily afforded to humble friends and dependants. The Laird's predecessors had been imprudent, he himself was passive and unfortunate. Death swept away his sons, whose success in life might have balanced his own bad luck and incapacity. Debts increased and funds diminished, until ruin came. The estate was sold; and the old man was about to remove from the house of his fathers, to go he knew not whither, when, like an old piece of furniture, which, left alone in its wonted corner, may hold together for a long while, but breaks to pieces on an attempt to move it, he fell down on his own threshold under a paralytic affection.

The tutor awakened as from a dream. He saw his patron dead, and that his patron's only remaining child, an elderly woman, now neither graceful nor beautiful, if she had ever been either the one or the other, had by this calamity become a homeless and penniless orphan. He addressed her nearly in the words which Dominie Sampson uses to Miss Bertram, and professed his determination not to leave her. Accordingly, roused to the exercise of talents which had long slumbered, he opened a little school, and supported his patron's child for the rest of her life, treating her with

the same humble observance and devoted attention which he had used towards her in the days of her prosperity.

Such is the outline of Dominie Sampson's real story, in which there is neither romantic incident nor sentimental passion; but which, perhaps, from the rectitude and simplicity of character which it displays, may interest the heart and fill the eye of the reader as irresistibly, as if it respected distresses of a more dignified or refined character.*

The novels which followed Guy Mannering and the Antiquary, proceeded, under the name of the *Author of Waverley*, in an unabated course of popularity, and I might, in that peculiar district of literature, have been termed *L'enfant gaté* of success.

It was plain, however, that frequent publication must finally wear out the public favor, unless some mode could be devised to give an appearance of novelty to subsequent productions. Scottish manners, Scottish dialect, and Scottish characters of note, being those with which I was most intimately and familiarly acquainted, were the groundwork upon which I had hitherto relied for giving effect to my narrative. It was, however, obvious, that this kind of interest must in the end occasion a degree of sameness and repetition, if exclusively resorted to.

Nothing can be more dangerous for the fame of a professor of the fine arts, than to permit (if he can possibly prevent it) the character of a mannerist to be attached to him, or that he should be supposed capable of success only in a particular and limited style. The public are, in general, very ready to adopt the opinion, that he who has pleased them in one peculiar mode of composition, is, by means of that very talent, rendered incapable of venturing upon other subjects. The effect of this disinclination, on the part of the public, towards the artificers of their pleasures, when they attempt to enlarge their means of amusing, may be seen in the censures usually passed by vulgar criti-

* See No. XII. of the Appendix.

cism upon actors or artists who venture to change the character of their efforts, that, in so doing, they may enlarge the scale of their art.

There is some justice in this opinion, as there always is in such as attain general currency. It may often happen on the stage, that an actor, by possessing in a pre-eminent degree the external qualities necessary to give effect to comedy, may be deprived of the right to aspire to tragic excellence; and in painting or literary composition, an artist or poet may be master exclusively of modes of thought, and powers of expression, which confine him to a single course of subjects. But much more frequently the same capacity which carries a man to popularity in one department, will obtain for him success in another, and that must be more particularly the case in literary composition, than either in acting or painting, because the adventurer in that department is not impeded in his exertions by any peculiarity of features, or conformation of person, proper for particular parts, or, by any peculiar mechanical habits of using the pencil, limited to a particular class of subjects.

Whether this reasoning be correct or otherwise, I felt, that, in confining myself to subjects purely Scottish, I was not only likely to weary out the indulgence of my readers, but also greatly to limit my own power of affording them pleasure. In a highly polished country, where so much genius is monthly employed in catering for public amusement, a fresh topic, such as I had myself had the happiness to light upon, is the untasted spring of the desert;—

"Men bless their stars, and call it luxury."

But when men and horses, cattle, camels, and dromedaries, have poached the spring into mud, it becomes lothesome to those who at first drank of it with rapture; and he who had the merit of discovering it, if he would preserve his reputation with the tribe, must display his talent by a fresh discovery of untasted fountains.

If the author, who finds himself limited to a particu-

lar class of subjects, endeavors to sustain his reputation by striving to add a novelty of attraction to themes of the same character which have been formerly successful under his management, there are manifest reasons why, after a certain point, he is likely to fail. If the mine be not wrought out, the strength and capacity of the miner become necessarily exhausted. If he closely imitates the narratives which he has before rendered successful, he is doomed to "wonder that they please no more." If he struggles to take a different view of the same class of subjects, he speedily discovers that what is obvious, graceful, and natural, has been exhausted; and, in order to obtain the indispensable charm of novelty, he is forced upon caricature, and, to avoid being trite, must become extravagant.

It is not, perhaps, necessary to enumerate so many reasons why the author of the Scottish Novels, as they were then exclusively termed, was desirous to make an experiment on a subject purely English. It was his purpose, at the same time, to have rendered the experiment as complete as possible, by bringing the intended work before the public as the effort of a new candidate for their favor, in order that no degree of prejudice, whether favorable or the reverse, might attach to it, as a new production of the Author of Waverley; but this intention was afterwards departed from, for reasons to be hereafter mentioned.

The period of the narrative adopted was the reign of Richard I., not only as abounding with characters whose very names were sure to attract general attention, but as affording a striking contrast betwixt the Saxons, by whom the soil was cultivated, and the Normans, who still reigned in it as conquerors, reluctant to mix with the vanquished, or acknowledge themselves of the same stock. The idea of this contrast was taken from the ingenious and unfortunate Logan's tragedy of Runnamede, in which, about the same period of history, I had seen the Saxon and Norman barons opposed to each other on different sides of the

stage. I do not recollect that there was any attempt to contrast the two races in their habits and sentiments; and indeed it was obvious, that history was violated by introducing the Saxons still existing as a high-minded and martial race of nobles.

They did, however, survive as a people, and some of the ancient Saxon families possessed wealth and power, although they were exceptions to the humble condition of the race in general. It seemed to me, that the existence of the two races in the same country, the vanquished distinguished by their plain, homely, blunt manners, and the free spirit infused by their ancient institutions and laws; the victors, by the high spirit of military fame, personal adventure, and whatever could distinguish them as the Flower of Chivalry, might, intermixed with other characters belonging to the same time and country, interest the reader by the contrast, if the author should not fail on his part.

Scotland, however, had been of late used so exclusively as the scene of what is called Historical Romance, that the preliminary letter of Mr. Laurence Templeton became in some measure necessary. To this, the reader is referred, as expressing the author's purpose and opinions in undertaking this species of composition, under the necessary reservation, that he is far from thinking he has attained the point at which he aimed.*

It is scarcely necessary to add, that there was no idea or wish to pass off the supposed Mr. Templeton as a real person. But a kind of continuation of the Tales of my Landlord had been recently attempted by a stranger, and it was supposed this Dedicatory Epistle might pass for some imitation of the same kind, and thus putting inquirers upon a false scent, induce them to believe they had before them the work of some new candidate for their favor.

After a considerable part of the work had been finished and printed, the publishers, who pretended to

* See No. XIII. of the Appendix.

discern in it a germ of popularity, remonstrated strenuously against its appearing as an absolutely anonymous production, and contended that it should have the advantage of being announced as by the Author of Waverley. I did not make any obstinate opposition, for I began to be of opinion with Dr. Wheeler, in Miss Edgeworth's excellent tale of "Manœuvring," that "Trick upon Trick" might be too much for the patience of an indulgent public, and might be reasonably considered as trifling with their favor.

The book, therefore, appeared as an avowed continuation of the Waverley Novels; and it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge, that it met with the same favorable reception as its predecessors.

Sufficient information in regard to most of the characters which I introduced, is to be found in general history; but I should state here, that one incident in the tale, which had the good fortune to find favor in the eyes of many readers, is more directly borrowed from the stores of old romance. I mean the meeting of the king with Friar Tuck at the cell of that buxom hermit. The general tone of the story belongs to all ranks and all countries, which emulate each other in describing the rambles of a disguised sovereign, who, going in search of information or amusement, into the lower ranks of life, meets with adventures diverting to the reader or hearer, from the contrast betwixt the monarch's outward appearance, and his real character. The Eastern tale-teller has for his theme the disguised expeditions of Haroun Alraschid with his faithful attendants, Mesrour and Giafar, through the midnight streets of Bagdad; and Scottish tradition dwells upon the similar exploits of James V., distinguished during such excursions by the travelling name of the Goodman of Ballengeigh, as the Commander of the Faithful, when he desired to be incognito, was known by that of Il Bondocani. The French minstrels are not silent on so popular a theme. There must have been a Norman original of the Scottish metrical romance of Rauf Colziar, in which Charlemagne is introduced as the un-

known guest of a charcoal-man.* It seems to have been the original of other poems of the kind.

In merry England there is no end of popular ballads on this theme. The poem of John the Reeve, or Steward, mentioned by Bishop Percy, in the Reliques of English Poetry,† is said to have turned on such an incident; and we have besides, the King and the Tanner of Tamworth, the King and the Miller of Mansfield, and others on the same topic. But the peculiar tale of this nature to which the author of Ivanhoe has to acknowledge an obligation, is more ancient by two centuries than any of these last mentioned.

It was first communicated to the public in that curious record of ancient literature, which has been accumulated by the combined exertions of Sir Egerton Brydges and Mr. Hazlewood, in the periodical work entitled the British Bibliographer. From thence it has been transferred by the Reverend Charles Henry Hartshorne, M. A., editor of a very curious volume, entitled "Ancient Metrical Tales, printed chiefly from original sources, 1829." Mr. Hartshorne gives no other authority for the present fragment, except the article in the Bibliographer,‡ where it is entitled the Kyng and the Hermite.

The name of Ivanhoe, given to this romance, was suggested by an old rhyme. All novelists have had occasion at some time or other to wish with Falstaff, that they knew where a commodity of good names was to be had. On such an occasion, the author chanced to call to memory a rhyme recording three names of the manors forfeited by the ancestor of the celebrated Hampden, for striking the Black Prince a blow with his racket, when they quarrelled at tennis;

"Tring, Wing, and Ivanhoe,
For striking of a blow,
Hampden did forego,
And glad he could escape so."

* This very curious poem, long a *desideratum* in Scottish literature, and given up as irrecoverably lost, was lately brought to light by the researches of Dr. Irvine of the Advocates' Library, and has been reprinted by Mr. David Laing, Edinburgh.

† Vol. ii p. 167. ‡ See No. XIV. of the Appendix.

The word suited the author's purpose in two material respects,—for, first, it had an English sound, and, secondly, it conveyed no indication whatever of the nature of the story. I presume to hold this last quality of no small importance. What is called a taking title serves the direct interest of the bookseller or publisher, who by this means sometimes sells an edition while it is yet passing in the press. But if the author permits an over degree of attention to be drawn to his work ere it has appeared, he places himself in the embarrassing condition of having excited a degree of expectation, which, if he proves unable to satisfy, is an error fatal to his literary reputation. Besides, when we meet such a title as the Gunpowder Plot, or any other connected with general history, each reader, before he has seen the book, has formed to himself some particular idea of the sort of manner in which the story is to be conducted, and the nature of the amusement which he is to derive from it. In this he is probably disappointed, and in that case may be naturally disposed to visit upon the author or the work, the unpleasant feelings thus excited. In such a case the literary adventurer is censured, not for having missed the mark at which he himself aimed, but for not having shot off his shaft in a direction he never thought of.

The character of the fair Jewess found so much favor in the eyes of some fair readers, that the writer was censured, because, when arranging the fates of the characters of the drama, he had not assigned the hand of Wilfred to Rebecca, rather than the less interesting Rowena. But, not to mention that the prejudices of the age rendered such an union almost impossible, the author may, in passing, observe, that he thinks a character of a highly virtuous and lofty stamp, is degraded rather than exalted by an attempt to reward virtue with temporal prosperity. Such is not the recompense which Providence has deemed worthy of suffering merit, and it is a dangerous and fatal doctrine to teach young persons, the most common readers of romance, that rectitude of conduct and of principle is

either naturally allied with, or adequately rewarded by, the gratification of our passions, or attainment of our wishes. In a word, if a virtuous and self-denying character is dismissed with temporal wealth, greatness, rank, or the indulgence of such a rashly-formed or ill-assorted passion as that of Rebecca for Ivanhoe, the reader will be apt to say, verily virtue has had its reward. But a glance on the great picture of life will show, that the duties of self-denial, and the sacrifice of passion to principle, are seldom thus remunerated; and that the internal consciousness of their high-minded discharge of duty, produces on their own reflections a more adequate recompense, in the form of that peace which the world cannot give or take away.

On the footing of unreserved communication which I have established with my reader, I may here also add the trifling circumstance, that a roll of Norman warriors occurring in the Auchinbeck manuscript, suggested to me the formidable name of Front-de-Bœuf.

Ivanhoe was highly successful upon its appearance, and may be said to have procured its author the freedom of the rules, since he has ever since been permitted to exercise his powers of fictitious composition in England as well as in Scotland.

This indeed renders it more difficult to assign any good reason why, after using, in Ivanhoe, all the art I possessed to remove the personages, action, and manners of the tale, to a distance from my own country, I should choose for the scene of my next attempt the celebrated ruins of Melrose, in the immediate neighborhood of my own residence. But the reason, or caprice, which dictated a change of system, has entirely escaped my recollection, nor is it worth while to attempt recalling what must be a matter of very little consequence.

The general plan of my next tale, the Monastery, was, to conjoin two characters in that bustling and contentious age, who, thrown into situations which gave them different views on the subject of the Reformation, should, with the same sincerity and purity of intention, dedicate themselves, the one to the support of

the sinking fabric of the Catholic Church, the other to the establishment of the Reformed doctrines. It was supposed that some interesting subjects for narrative might be derived from opposing two such enthusiasts to each other in the path of life, and contrasting the real worth of both with their passions and prejudices. The localities of Melrose suited well the scenery of the proposed story; the ruins themselves form a splendid theatre for any tragic incident which might be brought forward; joined to the vicinity of the fine river, with all its tributary streams, flowing through a country which has been the scene of so much fierce fighting, and is rich with so many recollections of former times, and lying almost under the immediate eye of the author, by whom they were to be used in composition.

The situation possessed farther recommendations. On the opposite bank of the Tweed might be seen the remains of ancient inclosures, surrounded by sycamores and ash-trees of considerable size. These had once formed the crofts or arable ground of a village, now reduced to a single hut, the abode of a fisherman, who also manages a ferry. The cottages, even the church which once existed there, have sunk into vestiges hardly to be traced without visiting the spot, the inhabitants having gradually withdrawn to the more prosperous town of Galashiels, which has risen into consideration, within two miles of their neighborhood. Superstitious eld, however, has tenanted the deserted groves with aerial beings, to supply the want of the mortal tenants who have deserted it. The ruined and abandoned churchyard of Boldside has been long believed to be haunted by the Fairies, and the deep broad current of the Tweed, wheeling in moonlight round the foot of the steep bank, with the number of trees originally planted for shelter round the fields of the cottagers, but now presenting the effect of scattered and detached groves, fill up the idea which one would form in imagination for a scene that Oberon and Queen Mab might love to revel in. There are evenings when

the spectator might believe, with Father Chaucer, that the

> ———"Queen of Faery,
> With harp, and pipe, and symphony,
> Were dwelling in the place."

Another, and even a more familiar refuge of the elfin race, (if tradition is to be trusted,) is the glen of the river, or rather brook, named the Allen, which falls into the Tweed from the northward, about a quarter of a mile above the present bridge. As the streamlet finds its way behind Lord Sommerville's hunting-seat, called the Pavilion, its valley has been popularly termed the Fairy Dean, or rather the Nameless Dean, because of the supposed ill-luck attached by the popular faith of ancient times, to any one who might name or allude to the race, whom our fathers distinguished as the Good Neighbors, and the Highlanders called Daoine Shie, or Men of Peace, rather by way of compliment, than on account of any particular idea of friendship or pacific relation which either Highlander or Borderer entertained towards the irritable beings whom they thus distinguished, or supposed them to bear to humanity.

In evidence of the actual operations of the fairy people even at this time, little pieces of calcareous matter are found in the glen after a flood, which either the labors of those tiny artists, or the eddies of the brook among the stones, have formed into a fantastic resemblance of cups, saucers, basins, and the like, in which children who gather them pretend to discern fairy utensils.

Besides these circumstances of romantic locality, *mea paupera regna* (as Captain Dalgetty denominates his territory of Drumthwacket) are bounded by a small but deep lake, from which eyes that yet look on the light are said to have seen the water-bull ascend, and shake the hills with his roar.

Indeed, the country around Melrose, if possessing less of romantic beauty than some other scenes in Scotland, is connected with so many associations of a fanciful nature, in which the imagination takes de-

light, as might well induce one even less attached to the spot than myself, to accommodate, after a general manner, the imaginary scenes he was framing to the localities to which he was partial. But it would be a misapprehension to suppose, that, because Melrose may in general pass for Kennaquhair, or because it agrees with scenes of the Monastery in the circumstances of the drawbridge, the mill-dam, and other points of resemblance, that therefore an accurate or perfect local similitude is to be found in all the particulars of the picture. It was not my purpose to present a landscape copied from nature, but a piece of composition, in which a real scene, with which I am familiar, had afforded me some leading outlines. Thus the resemblance of the imaginary Glendearg with the real vale of the Allen, is far from being minute, nor did I aim at identifying them. This must appear plain to all who know the actual character of the Glen of Allen, and have taken the trouble to read the account of the imaginary Glendearg. The stream in the latter case is described as wandering down a romantic little valley, shifting itself, after the fashion of such a brook, from one side to the other, as it can most easily find its passage, and touching nothing in its progress that gives token of cultivation. It rises near a solitary tower, the abode of a supposed church vassal, and the scene of several incidents in the Romance.

The real Allen, on the contrary, after traversing the romantic ravine called the Nameless Dean, thrown off from side to side alternately, like a billiard ball repelled by the sides of the table on which it has been played, and in that part of its course resembling the stream which pours down Glendearg, may be traced upwards into a more open country, where the banks retreat further from each other, and the vale exhibits a good deal of dry ground, which has not been neglected by the active cultivators of the district. It arrives, too, at a sort of termination, striking in itself, but totally irreconcilable with the narrative of the Romance. Instead of a single peel-house, or border tower of defence, such as Dame Glendinning is supposed to have inhab-

ited, the head of the Allen, about five miles above its junction with the Tweed, shows three ruins of Border houses, belonging to different proprietors, and each, from the desire of mutual support so natural to troublesome times, situated at the extremity of the property of which it is the principal messuage. One of these is the ruinous mansion-house of Hillslap, formerly the property of the Cairncrosses, and now of Mr. Innes of Stow: a second the tower of Colmslie, an ancient inheritance of the Borthwick family, as is testified by their crest, the Goat's Head, which exists on the ruin; a third, the house of Langshaw, also ruinous, but near which the proprietor, Mr. Baillie of Jerviswood and Mellerstain, has built a small shooting-box.

All these ruins, so strangely huddled together in a very solitary spot, have recollections and traditions of their own, but none of them bear the most distant resemblance to the descriptions in the Romance of the Monastery; and as the author could hardly have erred so grossly regarding a spot within a morning's ride of his own house, the inference is, that no resemblance was intended. Hillslap is remembered by the humors of the last inhabitants, two or three elderly ladies, of the class of Miss Raylands, in the Old Manor House, though less important by birth and fortune. Colmslie is commemorated in song:—

"Colmslie stands on Colmslie hill,
The water it flows round Colmslie mill;
The mill and the kiln gang bonnily,
And its up with the whippers of Colmslie!

Langshaw, although larger than the other mansions assembled at the head of the supposed Glendearg, has nothing about it more remarkable than the inscription of the present proprietor over his shooting-lodge—*Utinam hanc etiam veris implcam amicis*—a modest wish, which I know no one more capable of attaining upon an extended scale, than the gentleman who has expressed it upon a limited one.

Having thus shown that I could say something of these desolated towers, which the desire of social intercourse, or the facility of mutual defence, had drawn

together at the head of this Glen, I need not add any further reason to show, that there is no resemblance between them and the solitary habitation of Dame Elspeth Glendinning. Beyond these dwellings are some remains of natural wood, and a considerable portion of morass and bog; but I would not advise any who may be curious in localities, to spend time in looking for the fountain and holly-tree of the White Lady.

While I am on the subject, I may add, that Captain Clutterbuck, the imaginary editor of the Monastery, has no real prototype in the village of Melrose or neighborhood, that ever I saw or heard of. To give some individuality to this personage, he is described as a character which sometimes occurs in actual society—a person who, having spent his life within the necessary duties of a technical profession, from which he has been at length emancipated, finds himself without any occupation whatever, and is apt to become the prey of ennui, until he discerns some petty subject of investigation commensurate to his talents, the study of which gives him employment in solitude; while the conscious possession of information peculiar to himself, adds to his consequence in society. I have often observed, that the lighter and trivial branches of antiquarian study are singularly useful in relieving vacuity of such a kind, and have known them serve many a Captain Clutterbuck to retreat upon; I was therefore a good deal surprised, when I found the antiquarian Captain identified with a neighbor and friend of my own, who could never have been confounded with him by any one who had read the book, and seen the party alluded to. This erroneous identification occurs in a work entitled "Illustrations of the Author of Waverley, being Notices and Anecdotes of real Characters, Scenes, and Incidents, supposed to be described in his works, by Robert Chambers." This work was, of course, liable to many errors, as any one of the kind must be, whatever may be the ingenuity of the author, which takes the task of explaining what can be only known to another person. Mistakes of place or inanimate things referred to, are of very little moment; but

the ingenious author ought to have been more cautious of attaching real names to fictitious characters. I think it is in the Spectator we read of a rustic wag, who, in a copy of "The Whole Duty of Man," wrote opposite to every vice the name of some individual in the neighborhood, and thus converted that excellent work into a libel on a whole parish.

The scenery being thus ready at the author's hand, the reminiscences of the country were equally favorable. In a land where the horses remained almost constantly saddled, and the sword seldom quitted the warrior's side—where war was the natural and constant state of the inhabitants, and peace only existed in the shape of brief and feverish truces—there could be no want of the means to complicate and extricate the incidents of his narrative at pleasure. There was a disadvantage, notwithstanding, in treading this Border district, for it had been already ransacked by the author himself, as well as others; and unless presented under a new light, was likely to afford ground to the objection of *Crambe bis cocta.*

To attain the indispensable quality of novelty, something, it was thought, might be gained by contrasting the character of the vassals of the church with those of the dependants of the lay barons, by whom they were surrounded. But much advantage could not be derived from this. There were, indeed, differences betwixt the two classes, but, like tribes in the mineral and vegetable world, which, resembling each other to common eyes, can be sufficiently well discriminated by naturalists, they were yet too similar, upon the whole, to be placed in marked contrast with each other.

Machinery remained—the introduction of the supernatural and marvellous; the resort of distressed authors since the days of Horace, but whose privileges as a sanctuary have been disputed in the present age, and well-nigh exploded. The popular belief no longer allows the possibility of existence to the race of mysterious beings which hovered betwixt this world and that which is invisible. The fairies have abandon-

their moonlight turf; the witch no longer holds her black orgies in the hemlock dell, and

> "Even the last lingering phantom of the brain,
> The churchyard ghost, is now at rest again."

From the discredit attached to the vulgar and more common modes in which the Scottish superstition displays itself, I was induced to have recourse to the beautiful, though almost forgotten, theory of astral spirits, or creatures of the elements, surpassing human beings in knowledge and power, but inferior to them, as being subject, after a certain space of years, to a death which is to them annihilation, as they have no share in the promise made to the sons of Adam. These spirits are supposed to be of four distinct kinds, as the elements from which they have their origin, and are known, to those who have studied the cabalistical philosophy, by the names of Sylphs, Gnomes, Salamanders, and Naiads, as they belong to the elements of Air, Earth, Fire, or Water. The general reader will find an entertaining account of these elementary spirits in the French book, entitled, "Entretiens de Compte du Gabalis." The ingenious Compte de la Motte Fouqué composed, in German, one of the most successful productions of his fertile brain, where a beautiful and even afflicting effect is produced by the introduction of a water-nymph, who loses the privilege of immortality, by consenting to become accessible to human feelings, and uniting her lot with that of a mortal, who treats her with ingratitude.

In imitation of an example so successful, the White Lady of Avenel was introduced into the novel. She is represented as connected with the family of Avenel by one of those mystic ties, which, in ancient times, were supposed to exist, in certain circumstances, between the creatures of the elements and the children of men. Such instances of mysterious union are recognized in Ireland, in the real Milesian families, who are possessed of a Banshie; and they are known among the traditions of the Highlanders, which, in many cases, attached an immortal being or spirit to the service of particular families or tribes. These demons, if they

are to be called so, announced good or evil fortune to the families connected with them; and though some only condescended to meddle with matters of importance, others, like the May Molloch, or Maid of the Hairy Arms, condescended to mingle in ordinary sports, and even to direct the Chief how to play at draughts.

There was, therefore, no great violence in supposing such a being as this to have existed, while the elementary spirits were believed in; but it was more difficult to describe or imagine its attributes and principles of action. Shakspeare, the first of authorities in such a case, has painted Ariel, that beautiful creature of his fancy, as only approaching so near to humanity as to know the nature of that sympathy which the creatures of clay felt for each other, as we learn from the expression—"Mine would if I were human." The inferences from this are singular, but seem capable of regular deduction. A being, however superior to man in length of life—in power over the elements—in certain perceptions respecting the present, the past, and the future, yet still incapable of human passions, of sentiments of moral good and evil, of meriting future rewards or punishments, belongs rather to the class of animals than of human creatures, and must therefore be presumed to act more from temporary benevolence or caprice, than from any thing approaching to feeling or reasoning. Such a being's superiority in power can only be compared to that of the elephant or lion, who are greater in strength than man, though inferior in the scale of creation. The partialities which we suppose such spirits to entertain must be like those of the dog; their sudden starts of passion, or the indulgence of a frolic, or mischief, may be compared to those of the numerous varieties of the cat. All these propensities are, however, controlled by the laws which render the elementary race subordinate to the command of man—liable to be subjected by his science, (so the sect of Gnostics believed, and on this turned the Rosicrucian philosophy,) or to be overpowered by his supe-

rior courage and daring, when he set their illusions at defiance.

It is with reference to this idea of the supposed spirits of the elements, that the White Lady of Avenel is represented as acting a varying, capricious, and inconsistent part in the pages assigned to her in the narrative; manifesting interest and attachment to the family with whom her destinies are associated, but evincing whim, and even a species of malevolence, towards other mortals, as the Sacristan and the Border robber, whose incorrect life subjected them to receive petty mortifications at her hand. The White Lady is scarcely supposed, however, to have possessed either the power or the inclination to do more than inflict terror or create embarrassment, and is always subjected by those mortals, who, by virtuous resolution, and mental energy, could assert superiority over her. In these particulars she seems to constitute a being of a middle class, between the *esprit follet* who places its pleasure in misleading and tormenting mortals, and the benevolent Fairy of the East, who uniformly guides, aids, and supports them.

Either, however, the author executed his purpose differently, or the public did not approve of it; for the White Lady of Avenel was far from being popular. I do not now make the present statement, in the view of arguing readers into a more favorable opinion on the subject, but merely with the purpose of exculpating myself from the charge of having wantonly intruded into the narrative a being of inconsistent powers and propensities.

In the delineation of another character, I also failed, where I hoped for some success. As nothing is so successful a subject of ridicule as the fashionable follies of the time, it occurred to me that the more serious scenes of my narrative might be relieved by the humor of a cavaliero of the age of Queen Elizabeth. In every period, the attempt to gain and maintain the highest rank of society, has depended on the power of assuming and supporting a certain fashionable kind of affectation, usually connected with some vivacity of

talent and energy of character, but distinguished at the same time by a transcendent flight, beyond sound reason and common sense; both faculties too vulgar to be admitted into the estimate of one who claims to be esteemed "a choice spirit of the age." These, in their different phases, constitute the gallants of the day, whose boast it is to drive the whims of fashion to extremity.

On all occasions, the manners of the sovereign, the court, and the time, must give the tone to the peculiar description of qualities by which those who would attain the height of fashion must seek to distinguish themselves. The reign of Elizabeth, being that of a maiden queen, was distinguished by the decorum of the courtiers, and especially the affectation of the deepest deference to the sovereign. After the acknowledgment of the Queen's matchless perfections, the same devotion was extended to beauty as it existed among the lesser stars in her court, who sparkled, as it was the mode to say, by her reflected lustre. It is true, that gallant knights no longer vowed to Heaven, the peacock, and the ladies, to perform some feat of extravagant chivalry, in which they endangered the lives of others as well as their own; but although their chivalrous displays of personal gallantry seldom went further in Elizabeth's days than the tilt-yard, where barricades, called barriers, prevented the shock of the horses, and limited the display of the cavaliers' skill to the comparatively safe encounter of their lances, the language of the lovers to their ladies was still in the exalted terms which Amadis would have addressed to Oriana, before encountering a dragon for her sake. This tone of romantic gallantry found a clever but conceited author, to reduce it to a species of constitution and form, and lay down the courtly manner of conversation, in a pedantic book, called Euphues and his England.

The extravagance of Euphuism, or a symbolical jargon of the same class, predominates in the romances of Calprenade and Scuderi, which were read for the amusement of the fair sex of France during the long

reign of Louis XIV., and were supposed to contain the only legitimate language of love and gallantry. In this reign they encountered the satire of Molière and Boileau. A similar disorder, spreading into private society, formed the ground of the affected dialogue of the *Précieuses*, as they were styled, who formed the coterie of the Hotel de Rambouillet, and afforded Molière matter for his admirable comedy, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. In England, the humor does not seem to have long survived the accession of James I.

I had the vanity to think that a character whose peculiarities should turn on the extravagances which were once universally fashionable, might be read in a fictitious story with a good chance of affording amusement to the existing generation, who, fond as they are of looking back on the actions and manners of their ancestors, might be also supposed to be sensible of their absurdities. I must fairly acknowledge that I was disappointed, and that the Euphuist, far from being accounted a well drawn and humorous character of the period, was condemned as unnatural and absurd.

It would be easy to account for this failure, by supposing the defect to arise from the author's want of skill, and, probably, many readers may not be inclined to look further. But, as the author himself can scarcely be supposed willingly to acquiesce in this final cause, if any other can be alleged, he has been led to suspect, that, contrary to what he originally supposed, his subject was injudiciously chosen, in which, and not in his mode of treating it, lay the source of the want of success.

The manners of a rude people are always founded on nature, and therefore the feelings of a more polished generation immediately sympathize with them. We need no numerous notes, no antiquarian dissertations, to enable the most ignorant to recognize the sentiments and diction of the characters of Homer; we have but, as Lear says, to strip off our lendings—to set aside the factitious principles and adornments which we have received from our comparatively artificial system of society, and our natural feelings are in

unison with those of the bard of Chios, and the heroes who live in his verses. It is the same with a great part of the narratives of my friend Mr. Cooper. We sympathize with his Indian chiefs and back-woodsmen, and acknowledge, in the characters which he presents to us, the same truth of human nature by which we should feel ourselves influenced if placed in the same condition. So much is this the case, that though it is difficult, or almost impossible, to reclaim a savage, bred from his youth to war and the chase, to the restraints and the duties of civilized life, nothing is more easy or common, than to find men who have been educated in all the habits and comforts of improved society, willing to exchange them for the wild labors of the hunter and the fisher. The very amusements most pursued and relished by men of all ranks, whose constitutions permit active exercise, are hunting, fishing, and in some instances, war, the natural and necessary business of the savage of Dryden, where his hero talks of being

> ——"As free as Nature first made man,
> When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

But although the occupations, and even the sentiments, of human beings in a primitive state, find access and interest in the minds of the more civilized part of the species, it does not therefore follow, that the national tastes, opinions, and follies, of one civilized period, should afford either the same interest or the same amusement to those of another. These generally, when driven to extravagance, are founded not upon any natural taste proper to the species, but upon the growth of some peculiar cast of affectation, with which mankind in general, and succeeding generations in particular, feel no common interest or sympathy. The extravagances of coxcombry in manners and apparel are indeed the legitimate, and often the successful objects of satire, during the time when they exist. In evidence of this, theatrical critics may observe how many dramatic *jeux d'esprit* are well received every season, because the satirist levels at some well-known

or fashionable absurdity; or, in the dramatic phrase, "shoots folly as it flies." But when the peculiar kind of folly keeps the wing no longer, it is reckoned but waste of powder to pour a discharge of ridicule on what has ceased to exist; and the pieces in which such forgotten absurdities are made the subject of ridicule, fall quietly into oblivion with the follies which gave them fashion, or only continue to exist on the scene, because they contain some other permanent interest than that which connects them with manners and follies of a temporary character.

This, perhaps, affords a reason why the comedies of Ben Jonson, founded upon system, or what the age termed humors,—by which was meant factitious and affected characters, superinduced on that which was common to the rest of their race,—in spite of acute satire, deep scholarship, and strong sense, do not now afford general pleasure, but are confined to the closet of the antiquary, whose studies have assured him that the personages of the dramatist were once, though they are now no longer, portraits of existing nature.

Let us take another example of our hypothesis from Shakspeare himself, who, of all authors, drew his portraits for all ages. With the whole sum of the idolatry which affects us at his name, the mass of readers peruse, without amusement, the characters formed on the extravagances of temporary fashion; and the Euphuist Don Armado, the pedant Holofernes, even Nym and Pistol, are read with little pleasure by the mass of the public, being portraits of which we cannot recognize the humor, because the originals no longer exist. In like manner, while the distresses of Romeo and Juliet continue to interest every bosom, Mercutio, drawn as an accurate representation of the finished fine gentleman of the period, and as such received by the unanimous approbation of contemporaries, has so little to interest the present age, that, stripped of all his puns and quirks of verbal wit, he only retains his place in the scene, in virtue of his fine and fanciful speech upon dreaming, which belongs to no particular age,

and because he is a personage whose presence is indispensable to the plot.

I have already prosecuted perhaps too far an argument, the tendency of which is to prove, that the introduction of an humorist, acting, like Sir Piercie Shafton, upon some forgotten and obsolete model of folly, once fashionable, is rather likely to awaken the disgust of the reader, as unnatural, than find him food for laughter. Whether owing to this theory, or whether to the more simple and probable cause of the author's failure in the delineation of the subject he had proposed to himself, the formidable objection of *incredulus odi* was applied to the Euphuist, as well as to the White Lady of Avenel; and the one was denounced as unnatural, while the other was rejected as impossible.

There was little in the story to atone for these failures in two principal points. The incidents were inartificially huddled together. There was no part of the intrigue to which deep interest was found to apply; and the conclusion was brought about, not by incidents arising out of the story itself, but in consequence of public transactions, with which the narrative has little connexion, and which the reader had little opportunity to become acquainted with.

This, if not a positive fault, was yet a great defect in the Romance. It is true, that not only the practice of some great authors in this department, but even the general course of human life itself, may be quoted in favor of this more obvious, and less artificial practice, of arranging a narrative. It is seldom that the same circle of personages who have surrounded an individual at his first outset in life, continue to have an interest in his career till his fate comes to a crisis. On the contrary, and more especially if the events of his life be of a varied character, and worth communicating to others, or to the world, the hero's later connexions are usually totally separated from those with whom he began the voyage, but whom the individual has outsailed, or who have drifted astray, or foundered on the passage. This hackneyed comparison holds good in

another point. The numerous vessels of so many different sorts, and destined for such different purposes, which are launched in the same mighty ocean, although each endeavors to pursue its own course, are in every case more influenced by the winds and tides, which are common to the element which they all navigate, than by their own separate exertions. And it is thus in the world; that, when human prudence has done its best, some general, perhaps national event, destroys the schemes of the individual, as the casual touch of a more powerful being sweeps away the web of the spider.

Many excellent romances have been composed in this view of human life, where the hero is conducted through a variety of detached scenes, in which various agents appear and disappear, without, perhaps, having any permanent influence on the progress of the story. Such is the structure of Gil Blas, Roderick Random, and the lives and adventures of many other heroes, who are described as running through different stations of life, and encountering various adventures, which are only connected with each other by having happened to be witnessed by the same individual, whose identity unites them together, as the string of a necklace links the beads, which are otherwise detached.

But though such an unconnected course of adventures is what most frequently occurs in nature, yet the province of the romance writer being artificial, there is more required from him than a mere compliance with the simplicity of reality,—just as we demand from the scientific gardener, that he shall arrange, in curious knots and artificial parterres, the flowers which "nature boon" distributes freely on hill and dale. Fielding, accordingly, in most of his novels, but especially in Tom Jones, his *chef-d'œuvre*, has set the distinguished example of a story regularly built and consistent in all its parts, in which nothing occurs, and scarce a personage is introduced, that has not some share in tending to advance the catastrophe.

To demand equal correctness and felicity in those

who may follow in the track of that illustrious novelist, would be to fetter too much the power of giving pleasure, by surrounding it with penal rules; since of this sort of light literature it may be especially said—*tout genre est permis, hors le genre ennuyeux.* Still, however, the more closely and happily the story is combined, and the more natural and felicitous the catastrophe, the nearer such a composition will approach the perfection of the novelist's art; nor can an author neglect this branch of his profession, without incurring proportional censure.

From these remarks the reader will infer that I considered the Monastery as something very like a failure. It is true that the booksellers did not complain of the sale, because, unless on very felicitous occasions, or on those which are equally the reverse, literary popularity is not gained or lost by a single publication. Leisure must be allowed for the tide both to flow and ebb. But I was conscious that, in my situation, not to advance was in some degree to recede, and being naturally unwilling to think that the principle of decay lay in myself, I was at least desirous to know of a certainty, whether the degree of discountenance which I had incurred, was owing to an ill-managed story, or an ill-chosen subject.

I was never, I confess, one of those who are willing to suppose the brains of an author to be a kind of milk, which will not stand above a single creaming, and who are eternally harping to young authors, to husband their efforts and to be chary of their reputation, lest it grow hackneyed in the eyes of men. Perhaps I was, and have always been, the more indifferent to the degree of estimation in which I might be held as an author, because I did not put so high a value, as many others, upon what is termed literary reputation in the abstract, or at least upon the species of popularity which had fallen to my share; for though it were worse than affectation to deny that my vanity was gratified at my success in the department in which chance had in some measure enlisted me, I was, nevertheless, far from thinking that the novelist or romance writer

stands high in the ranks of literature. But I spare the reader farther egotism on the subject, as I have expressed my opinion very fully in the Introductory Epistle to the Fortunes of Nigel; and although it be composed in an imaginary character, it is as sincere and candid as if it had been written "without my gown and band."

In a word, as soon as I found myself successful, I was tempted to try whether I could not restore, even at the risk of totally losing, my so called reputation, by a new hazard. I looked round my library, and could not but observe, that, from the time of Chaucer to that of Byron, the most popular authors had been the most prolific. Even the Aristarch Johnson allowed that the quality of readiness and profusion had a merit in itself, independent of the intrinsic value of the composition. Talking of Churchill, I believe, who had little merit in his prejudiced eyes, he allowed him that of fertility, with some such qualification as this: "A crab-apple can bear but crabs after all; but there is as great difference in favor of that which bears so large quantity of fruit, however indifferent, and that which produces only a few."

Looking more attentively at the patriarchs of literature, whose career was as long as it was brilliant, I thought I perceived that in a busy and prolonged course of exertion, there were no doubt occasional failures, but that still, those who were favorites of their age, triumphed over these miscarriages. By the new efforts which they made, their errors were obliterated, they became identified with the literature of their country, and after having long received law from the critics, came in some degree to impose it. And when such a writer was at length called from the scene, his death first made the public sensible what a large share he had occupied in their attention. I recollected a passage in Grimm's Correspondence, that while the unexhausted Voltaire sent forth tract after tract, to the very close of a long life, the first impression made by each as it appeared, was, that it was inferior to its predecessors; an opinion adopted from the general idea

that the Patriarch of Ferney must at last find the point from which he was to decline. But the opinion of the public finally ranked in succession the last of Voltaire's Essays on the same footing with those which had formerly charmed the French nation. The inference from this, and similar facts, seemed to me to be, that new works were often judged of by the public, not so much from their own intrinsic merit, as from extrinsic ideas which readers had previously formed with regard to them, and over which a writer might hope to triumph by patience and exertion. There is a risk in the attempt;

If he fall in, good night, or sink or swim.

But this is a chance incident to every literary attempt, and by which men of sanguine temper are little moved.

I may illustrate what I mean, by the feelings of most men in travelling. If we have found any stage particularly tedious, or in an especial degree interesting —particularly short, or much longer than we expected, —our imaginations are so apt to exaggerate the original impression, that, on repeating the journey, we usually find that we have considerably overrated the predominating quality, and the road appears to be duller or more pleasant, shorter or more tedious, than what we expected, and consequently than what is the actual case. It requires a third or a fourth journey to enable us to form an accurate judgment of its beauty, its length, or its other attributes.

In the same manner, the public, judging of a new work, which it receives perhaps with little expectation, if surprised into applause, becomes very often ecstatic, gives a great deal more approbation than is due, and elevates the child of its immediate favor to a rank which, as it affects the author, it is equally difficult to keep, and painful to lose. If, on this occasion, the author trembles at the height to which he is raised, and becomes afraid of the shadow of his own renown, he may indeed retire from the lottery with the prize which he has drawn—but, in future ages, his honor will be only in proportion to his labors. If, on the contrary

he rushes again into the lists, he is sure to be judged with severity proportioned to the former favor of the public. If he be daunted by a bad reception on this second occasion, he may again become a stranger to the arena. If, on the contrary, he can keep his ground, and stand the shuttlecock's fate, of being struck up and down, he will probably at length hold with some certainty the level in public opinion which he may be found to deserve; and he may perhaps boast of arresting the general attention in the same manner as the Bachelor Sampson Carrasco, of fixing the weathercock La Giralda of Seville for weeks, months, or years, that is, for as long as the wind shall uniformly blow from one quarter.

To this degree of popularity I have had the hardihood to aspire; and in order to reach it, I assumed, and have since maintained, the daring resolution to keep myself in view of the public by frequent appearances before them.

There can be but little amusement in seeking further to winnow out the few grains of truth which are contained in so large a mass of empty fiction. Before dismissing the subject of my novels, however, it may be proper to remark, that the scraps of poetry which have been in most cases tacked to the beginning of chapters, are sometimes quoted either from reading or from memory, but, in the general case, are pure invention. I found it too troublesome to turn to the collection of the British Poets to discover apposite mottoes; and, in the situation of the theatrical mechanist, who, when the white paper which represented his shower of snow was exhausted, continued the storm by snowing brown, I drew on my memory as long as I could, and, when that failed, eked it out with invention. I believe that, in some cases, where actual names are affixed to the supposed quotations, it would be to little purpose to seek them in the works of the authors referred to.

In frankly declaring the motives which so long induced me to conceal the authorship of the novels, I may be permitted to add, that when I made the avowal

I did so without shame. I am unconscious that there is any thing in their composition which deserves reproach, either on the score of religion or morality: I did so too without any feeling of exultation, because, whatever may have been their temporary success, I am well aware how much their reputation depends upon the caprice of fashion; and I have already mentioned the precarious tenure by which it is held, as a reason for displaying no great avidity in grasping at the possession.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

EXTRACT FROM AN ESSAY ON IMITATIONS OF THE ANCIENT BALLADS; PREFIXED TO THE NEW EDITION OF THE MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER.

Previous to this time, a new species of poetry seems to have arisen, which in some cases endeavored to pass itself as the production of genuine antiquity, and in others, honestly avowed an attempt to emulate the merits and avoid the errors with which the old ballad was encumbered; and in the effort to accomplish this, a new sort of composition was discovered, which is capable of being subjected to peculiar rules of criticism, and of exhibiting excellences of its own.

In writing for the use of the general reader, rather than the poetical antiquary, I shall be readily excused from entering into any inquiry respecting the authors who first showed the way in this peculiar department of modern poetry, which I may term the imitation of the old ballad, especially that of the latter or Elizabethan era. One of the oldest, according to my recollection, which pretends to engraft modern refinement upon ancient simplicity, is extremely beautiful, both from the words and the simple and affecting melody to which they are usually sung. The title is, "Lord Henry and Fair Catherine." It begins thus:

"In ancient days, in Britain's isle,
Lord Henry well was known;
No knight in all the land more famed,
Or more deserved renown.

His thoughts were all on honor bent,
He ne'er would stoop to love;
No lady in the land had power
His frozen heart to move."

Early in the eighteenth century, this peculiar species of composition became popular. We find Tickell,

the friend of Addison, who produced the beautiful ballad, "Of Leinster famed for maidens fair." Mallet, Goldsmith, Shenstone, Percy, and many others, followed an example which had much to recommend it, especially as it presented considerable facilities to those who wished, at as little exertion of trouble as possible, to attain for themselves a certain degree of literary reputation.

Before, however, treating of the professed imitators of Ancient Ballad Poetry, I ought to say a word upon those who have written their imitations with the preconceived purpose of passing them for ancient.

There is no small degree of cant in the violent invectives with which impostors of this nature have been assailed. In fact, the case of each is special, and ought to be separately considered, according to its own circumstances. If a young, perhaps a female author, chooses to circulate a beautiful poem, we will suppose that of Hardyknute, under the disguise of antiquity, the public is surely more enriched by the contribution than injured by the deception. It is hardly possible, indeed, without a power of poetical genius, and acquaintance with ancient language and manners possessed by very few, to succeed in deceiving those who have made this branch of literature their study. The very desire to unite modern refinement with the *verve* of the ancient minstrels, will itself betray the masquerade; so that, in order to secure the disguise, the maker is often compelled to lay aside the very qualities to which he must trust for exercising his talent with credit. A minute acquaintance with ancient customs, and with ancient history, is also demanded, to sustain a part which, as it must rest on deception, cannot be altogether an honorable one.

Two of the most distinguished authors of this class have, in this manner, been detected; being deficient in the knowledge requisite to support their genius in the disguise they meditated. Hardyknute, for instance, already mentioned, is irreconcilable with all chronology, and a chief with a Norwegian name is strangely introduced as the first of the nobles brought to resist

a Norse invasion, at the battle of Largs: the "needle-work so rare," introduced by the fair authoress, must have been certainly long posterior to the reign of Alexander III. In Chatterton's ballad of "Sir Charles Baudwin," we find an anxious attempt to represent the composition as ancient, and some entries in the public accounts of Bristol were appealed to in corroboration. But neither was this ingenious but most unhappy young man, with all his powers of poetry, and with the antiquarian knowledge which he had collected with indiscriminating but astonishing research, able to impose on that part of the public qualified to judge of the compositions, which it had occurred to him to pass off as those of a monk of the 14th century. It was in vain that he introduced and doubled the consonants, like the sentinels of an endangered army. The art used to disguise and misspell the words only overdid what was intended, and afforded sure evidence that the poems produced as antiques had been, in fact, tampered with by a modern artist, as the newly forged medals of modern days stand convicted of imposture from the very touches of the file, by which there is an attempt to imitate the cracks and fissures produced by the hammer upon the original.*

* This failure applies to the repairs and rifacimentos of old ballads, as well as to complete imitations. In the beautiful and simple ballad of Gil Morris, some affected person has stuck in one or two factitious verses, which, like vulgar persons in a drawing-room, betray themselves by their over finery. Thus, after the simple and affecting verse which prepares the readers for the coming tragedy.

"Gil Morrice sat in good green wood,
He whistled and he sang;
O, what mean a' yon folk coming,
My mother tarries lang?"

some such "vicious intromitter" as we have described, (to use a barbarous phrase for a barbarous proceeding,) has inserted the following quintessence of affectation:—

"His locks were like the threads of gold
Drawn from Minerva's loom;
His lips like roses drapping dew,
His breath was a' perfume.

I have only met, in my researches into these matters, with one poem, which, if it had been produced as ancient, could not have been detected on internal evidence. It is the war-song upon the victory at Brunnanburg, translated from the Anglo-Saxon into Anglo-Norman, by the Right Honorable John Hookham Frere, and published in Ellis's Specimens of Ancient English Poetry.* The accomplished Editor tells us, that this very singular poem was intended as an imitation of the style and language of the fourteenth century, and was written during the controversy occasioned by the poems attributed to Rowley. Mr. Ellis adds, "the reader will probably hear with some surprise, that this singular instance of critical ingenuity was the composition of an Eton schoolboy."

The author may be permitted to speak as an artist on this occasion, (disowning, at the same time, all purpose of imposition,) as having written, at the request of the late Mr. Ritson, one or two things of this kind, —among others, a continuation of the romance of Thomas of Ercildoune, the only one which chances to be preserved, and which the reader will find in vol. iv. And he thinks himself entitled to state, that a modern poet engaged in such a task, is much in the situation of an architect of the present day, who, if acquainted with his profession, finds no difficulty in copying the external forms of a Gothic castle or abbey; but when it is completed, can hardly, by any artificial tints or cement, produce the spots, weather-stains, and hues of different kinds, with which time alone could have invested the venerable fabric which he desires to imitate.

"His brow was like the mountain snow,
Gilt by the morning beam;
His cheeks like living roses blow,
His een like azure stream.

"The boy was clad in robes of green,
Sweet as the infant spring;
And like the mavis on the bush,
He gart the valleys ring."

* Vol. I. p. 32.

Leaving this branch of the subject, in which the difficulty of passing off what is modern for what is ancient cannot be matter of regret, we may bestow with advantage some brief consideration on the fair trade of manufacturing modern antiques, not for the purpose of passing them as contraband goods on the skilful antiquary, but in order to obtain the credit due to authors as successful imitators of the ancient simplicity, while their system admits of a considerable infusion of modern refinement. Two classes of imitation may be referred to as belonging to this species of composition. When they approach each other, there may be some difficulty in assigning to individual poems their peculiar character, but in general the difference is distinctly marked. The distinction lies betwixt the authors of ballads or legendary poems, who have attempted to imitate the language, the manners, and the sentiments of the ancient poems which were their prototypes; and those, on the contrary, who, without endeavoring to do so, have struck out a particular path for themselves, which cannot with strict propriety be termed either ancient or modern.

In the actual imitation of the ancient ballad, Dr. Percy, whose researches made him well acquainted with that department of poetry, was peculiarly successful. The "Hermit of Warkworth," the "Childe of Elle," and other minstrel tales of his composition, must always be remembered with fondness by those who have perused them in that period of life when the feelings are strong, and the taste for poetry, especially of this simple nature, keen and poignant. This learned and amiable prelate was also remarkable for his power of restoring the ancient ballad, by throwing in touches of poetry so adapted to its tone and tenor, as to assimilate with its original structure, and impress every one who considered the subject as being coeval with the rest of the piece. It must be owned, that such freedoms, when assumed by a professed antiquary, addressing himself to antiquaries, and for the sake of illustrating literary antiquities, are subject to great and licentious abuse; and herein the severity of Ritson

was to a certain extent justified. But when the license is avowed, and practised without the intention to deceive, it cannot be objected to but by scrupulous pedantry.*

The poet, perhaps, most capable, by verses, lines, even single words, to relieve and heighten the character of ancient poetry, was the Scottish bard Robert Burns! We are not here speaking of the avowed lyrical poems of his own composition, which he communicated to Mr. George Thomson, but of the manner in which he recomposed and repaired the old songs and fragments for the collection of Johnson and others, when, if his memory supplied the theme, or general subject of the song, such as it existed in Scottish lore, his genius contributed that part which was to give life and immortality to the whole. If this praise should be thought extravagant, the reader may compare his splendid lyric, "My heart's in the Highlands," with the tame and scarcely half-intelligible remains of that song as preserved by Mr. Peter Buchan. Or, what is perhaps a still more magnificent example of what we mean, "Macpherson's Farewell," with all its spirit and grandeur, as repaired by Burns, may be collated with the original poem called "Macpherson's Lament," or sometimes the "Ruffian's Rant." In Burns's brilliant rifacimento, the same strain of wild ideas is expressed as we find in the original; but with an infusion of the savage and impassioned spirit of Highland chivalry, which gives a splendor to the composition, of which we find not a trace in the rudeness of the ancient ditty. I can bear witness to the older verses having been current while I was a child, but I never knew a line of the inspired edition of the Ayrshire bard until the appearance of Johnson's Museum.

Besides Percy, Burns, and others, we must not omit to mention Mr. Finlay, whose beautiful song,

"There came a knight from the field of the slain,"

is so happily descriptive of antique manners; or Mickle, whose accurate and interesting imitations of

* See Appendix, No. V.

the ancient ballad we have already mentioned with approbation in the former Essay on Ballad Composition. These, with others of modern date, at the head of whom we must place Thomas Moore, have aimed at striking the ancient harp with the same bold and rough note to which it was awakened by the ancient minstrels. The Laureate, Wordsworth, and other distinguished names of the present century, have, in repeated instances, dignified this branch of literature, but no one more than Coleridge, in the wild and imaginative tale of the "Ancient Mariner," which displays so much beauty with such eccentricity. We should act most unjustly in this department of Scottish ballad poetry, not to mention the names of Leyden, Hogg, and Cunningham. They have all three honored their country, by arriving at distinction from an humble origin, and there is none of them under whose hand the ancient Scottish Harp has not sounded a bold and distinguished tone. Miss Anne Bannerman likewise should not be forgotten, whose "Tales of Superstition and Chivalry" appeared about 1802. They were perhaps too mystical and too abrupt; yet if it be the purpose of this kind of ballad poetry powerfully to excite the imagination, without pretending to satisfy it, few persons have succeeded better than this gifted lady, whose volume is peculiarly unfit to be read in a lonely house by a decaying lamp.

As we have already hinted, a numerous class of the authors (some of them of the very first class) who condescended to imitate the simplicity of ancient poetry, gave themselves no trouble to observe the costume, style, or manner, either of the old minstrel or ballad-singer, but assumed a structure of a separate and peculiar kind, which could not be correctly termed either ancient or modern, although made the vehicle of beauties which were common to both. The discrepancy between the mark which they avowed their purpose of shooting at, and that at which they really took aim, is best illustrated by a production of one of the most distinguished of their number. Goldsmith describes the

young family of his Vicar of Wakefield, as amusing themselves with conversing about poetry. Mr. Burchell observes, that the British poets, who imitated the classics, have especially contributed to introduce a false taste, by loading their lines with epithets, so as to present a combination of luxuriant images, without plot or connexion,—a string of epithets that improve the sound, without carrying on the sense. But when an example of popular poetry is produced as free from the fault which the critic has just censured, it is the well-known and beautiful poem of Edwin and Angelina; which, in felicitous attention to the language, and in fanciful ornament of imagery, is as unlike to a minstrel ballad, as a lady assuming the dress of a Shepherdess for a masquerade, is different from the actual Sisly of Salisbury Plain. Tickel's beautiful ballad is equally formed upon a pastoral, sentimental, and ideal model, not, however, less beautifully executed; and the attention of Addison's friend had been probably directed to the ballad stanza (for the stanza is all which is imitated) by the praise bestowed on Chevy Chase in the Spectator.

Upon a later occasion, the subject of Mallet's fine poem, Edwin and Emma, being absolutely rural in itself, and occurring at the hamlet of Bowes, in Yorkshire, might have seduced the poet from the *beau idéal* which he had pictured to himself, into something more immediately allied to common life. But Mallet was not a man to neglect what was esteemed fashionable, and poor Hannah Railton, and her lover Wrightson, were enveloped in the elegant but tinsel frippery appertaining to Edwin and Emma; for the similes, reflections, and suggestions of the poet are, in fact, too intrusive and too well said, to suffer the reader to feel the full taste of the tragic tale. The verses are doubtless beautiful, but I must own the simple prose of the Curate's letter, who gives the narrative of the tale as it really happened, has to me a tone of serious veracity more affecting than the ornaments of Mallet's fiction. The same author's ballad, "William and Margaret," has, in some degree, the same fault. A disembodied

spirit is not a person before whom the living spectator takes leisure to make remarks of a moral kind, as,

"So will the fairest face appear,
When youth and years are flown,
And such the robe that Kings must wear
When death has reft their crown."

Upon the whole, the ballad, though the best of Mallet's writing, is certainly inferior to its original, which I presume to be the very fine and even terrific old Scottish tale, beginning,

"There came a ghost to Margaret's door."

It may be found in Allan Ramsay's "Tea-table Miscellany."

We need only stop to mention another very beautiful poem of this fanciful kind, by Dr. Cartwright, called Osman and Elvira, containing some excellent poetry, expressed with unusual felicity. I have a vision of having met this accomplished gentleman in my very early youth, and am the less likely to be mistaken, as he was the first living poet I recollect to have seen.* His poem had the distinguished honor to be much ad-

* If I am right in what must be a very early recollection, I saw Mr. Cartwright (then a student of medicine at the Edinburgh university) at the house of my maternal grand-father, John Rutherford, M. D. I cannot here suppress some complaint of the newspapers of my own native city, which have repeatedly stated my mother to be the daughter of Mrs. Scott of Wauchope, born Miss Rutherford, and daughter of a gentleman of good family of that name, who was a Writer to the Signet. Mrs. Scott of Wauchope was authoress of Corah and other poems, and a correspondent of Burns. My mother was fond of poetry, but contented herself with admiring what she never dreamed of imitating. Dr. Rutherford, her father, was a man of high reputation in his time, and one of the four pupils of the celebrated Boerhaave, who first brought the University of Edinburgh into public notice, as a school of medicine. The error which I have noticed is of very little consequence in itself, but surely when it is worth while to mention so trivial a subject, some little care might be taken to make it accurate. Mrs. Scott of Wauchope, instead of being my grandmother, was as young as my mother, her supposed daughter. The only points in common between the ladies were, that they were both born of the respectable name of Rutherford, and both changed it by marriage for that of Scott. The circumstance is not much worth notice, but the author is rather too old to be stolen from his parent

mired by our celebrated philosopher, Dugald Stewart, who was wont to quote with much pathos, the picture of resignation in the following stanza:—

"And while his eye to Heaven he raised,
Its silent waters stole away."

After enumerating so many persons of undoubted genius, who have cultivated the Arcadian style of poetry, (for to such it may be compared,) it would be endless to enumerate the various Sir Eldreds of the hills and downs whose stories were woven into legendary tales, which came at length to be the name assigned to this half-ancient half-modern style of composition.

In general I may observe, that the supposed facility of this species of composition, the alluring simplicity of which was held sufficient to support it, afforded great attractions for those, whose ambition led them to exercise their untried talents in verse, but who were desirous to do so with the least possible expense of thought. The task seems to present, at least to the inexperienced acolyte of the Muses, the same advantages which an instrument of sweet sound and small compass offers to those who begin their studies in music. In either case, however, it frequently happens that the scholar, getting tired of the palling and monotonous character of the poetry or music which he produces, becomes desirous to strike a more independent note, even at the risk of its being a more difficult one.

The same simplicity involves an inconvenience fatal to the continued popularity of any species of poetry, by exposing it in a peculiar degree to ridicule and to parody. Dr. Johnson, whose style of poetry was of a very different and more stately description, could ridicule the ballads of Percy in such stanzas as these,—

"The tender infant, meek and mild,
Fell down upon a stone;
The nurse took up the squalling child,
But still the child squall'd on;"

with various slipshod imitations of the same quality. It did not require his talents to pursue this vein of rail-

lery, for it was such as most men could imitate, and all could enjoy. It is, therefore, little wonderful that this sort of composition should be repeatedly laid aside for considerable periods of time, and certainly as little so, that it should have been repeatedly revived, like some forgotten melody, and have again obtained some degree of popularity, until it sunk once more under satire, as well as parody, but, above all, the effects of satiety.

During the thirty years that I have paid some attention to literary matters, the taste for the ancient ballad melody, and for the closer or more distant imitation of that strain of poetry, has more than once arisen, and more than once subsided, in consequence, perhaps, of too unlimited indulgence. That this has been the case in other countries, we know; for the Spanish poet, when he found that the beautiful Morisco romances were excluding all other topics, confers upon them a hearty malediction.*

* See the Introduction to Lockhart's Spanish Ballads, p. xxii.

No. II.

APOLOGETIC LETTER FROM M. G. LEWIS, ESQ. TO HIS FATHER.

February 23, 1798.

MY DEAR FATHER,

THOUGH certain that the clamor raised against "The Monk" cannot have given you the smallest doubt of the rectitude of my intentions, or the purity of my principles, yet I am conscious it must have grieved you to find any doubts on the subject existing in the minds of other people. To express my sorrow for having given you pain is my motive for now addressing you, and also to assure you, that you shall not feel that pain a second time on my account. Having made you feel it at all, would be a sufficient reason, had I no others, to make me regret having published the first edition of "The Monk;" but I have others, weaker, indeed, than the one mentioned, but still sufficiently strong. I perceive that I have put too much confidence in the accuracy of my own judgment: that, convinced of my object being unexceptionable, I did not sufficiently examine whether the means by which I attained that object were equally so; and that, upon many accounts, I have to accuse myself of high imprudence. Let me, however, observe, that twenty is not the age at which prudence is most to be expected. Inexperience prevented my distinguishing what would give offence; but as soon as I found that offence was given, I made the only reparation in my power,—I carefully revised the work, and expunged every syllable on which could be grounded the slightest construction of immorality. This, indeed, was no difficult task; for the objections rested entirely on expressions too strong, and words carelessly chosen, not on the sentiments, *characters*, or general *tendency* of the work;—that the *latter* is *undeserving* censure, Addison will vouch for me. The moral and outline of my story are taken from an allegory inserted by him in the "Guardian," and which he commends highly for

ability of invention, and "*propriety* of *object*." Unluckily, in working it up, I thought that the stronger my colors, the more effect would my picture produce; and it never struck me that the exhibition of vice in her *temporary triumph*, might possibly do as much harm, as her final *exposure* and *punishment* could do good. To do *much* good, indeed, was more than I expected of my book; having always believed that our conduct depends on our own hearts and characters, not on the books we read, or the sentiments we hear. But though I did not hope much benefit to arise from the perusal of a trifling romance, written by a *youth* of *twenty*, I was in my own mind convinced, that no harm could be produced by a work whose object was furnished by one of our best moralists, and in the composition of which, I did not introduce a single incident, or a single character, without meaning to illustrate some maxim universally allowed. It was then with infinite surprise that I heard the outcry raised against the * * * *

[I regret that the letter, though once perfect, now only exists in my possession as a fragment.]

No. III.

WILLIAM AND HELEN.

From the German of Bürger.

I.

From heavy dreams fair Helen rose,
And eyed the dawning red:
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long!
O art thou false or dead?"

II.

With gallant Fred'rick's princely power
He sought the bold crusade;
But not a word from Judah's war
Told Helen how he sped.

III.

With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And ev'ry knight return'd to dry
The tears his love had shed.

IV.

Our gallant host was homeward bound,
With many a song of joy;
Green waved the laurel in each plume,
The badge of victory.

V.

And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts, and mirth, and melody,
The debt of love to pay.

VI.

Full many a maid her true-love met,
And sobb'd in his embrace;
And flutt'ring joy in smiles and tears
Array'd full many a face.

VII.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad!
She sought the host in vain;
For none could tell her William's fate,
If faithless, or if slain.

VIII.

The martial band is past and gone;
She rends her raven hair,
And in distraction's bitter mood,
She weeps with wild despair.

IX.

"O rise, my child," her mother said,
"Nor sorrow thus in vain;
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recall again."

X.

"O mother, what is gone, is gone,
What's lost, for ever lorn:
Death, death alone can comfort me;
O had I ne'er been born!

XI.

"O break my heart, O break at once!
Drink my life-blood, Despair!
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share."

XII.

"O enter not in judgment, Lord!"
The pious mother prays;
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child!
She knows not what she says.

XIII.

"O say thy pater-noster, child!
O turn to God and grace;
His will that turn'd thy bliss to bale
Can change thy bale to bliss."

XIV.

"O mother, mother! what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
My William's love was heaven on earth,
Without it earth is hell.

XV.

"Why should I pray to ruthless Heav'n,
Since my loved William's slain?

I only pray'd for William's sake,
And all my pray'rs were vain."

XVI.

"O take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow;
By resignation's humble pray'r
O hallow'd be thy woe!"

XVII.

"No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain:
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again.

XVIII.

"O break, my heart, O break at once!
Be thou my God, Despair!
Heav'n's heaviest blow has fall'n on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer."

XIX.

"O enter not in judgment, Lord,
With thy frail child of clay!
She knows not what her tongue has spoke;
Impute it not, I pray!

XX.

"Forbear, my child, this desp'rate woe,
And turn to God and grace;
Well can devotion's heavenly glow
Convert thy bale to bliss."

XXI.

"O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
Without my William what were heaven,
Or with him what were hell!"

XXII.

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,
Upbraids each sacred power,
Till spent, she sought her silent room
All in the lonely tower.

XXIII.

She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,
Till sun and day were o'er,
And through the glimmering lattice shone
The twinkling of the star.

XXIV.

Then crash! the heavy drawbridge fell,
That o'er the moat was hung;
And clatter! clatter! on its boards
The hoof of courser rung.

XXV.

The clank of echoing steel was heard
As off the rider bounded;
And slowly on the winding stair
A heavy footstep sounded.

XXVI.

And hark! and hark! a knock—Tap! tap!
A rustling stifled noise;—
Door latch and tinkling staples ring;—
At length a whispering voice.

XXVII.

"Awake, awake! arise, my love!
How, Helen, dost thou fare?
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st? laugh'st thou, or weep'st?
Hast thonght on me, my fair?

XXVIII.

"My love! my love!—so late by night!—
I waked, I wept for thee;
Much have I borne since dawn of morn;—
Where, William, couldst thou be?"

XXIX.

"We saddle late—From Hungary
I rode since darkness fell;
And to its bourne we both return
Before the matin bell."

XXX.

"O rest this night within my arms,
And warm thee in their fold!
Chill howls through hawthorn bush the wind;—
My love is deadly cold."

XXXI.

"Let the wind howl through hawthorn bush!
This night we must away;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright;
I cannot stay till day.

XXXII.

"Busk, busk, and boune! Thou mount'st behind
Upon my black barb steed:
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,
We haste to bridal-bed."

XXXIII.

"To-night—to-night a hundred miles!—
O dearest William, stay!
The bell strikes twelve—dark, dismal hour!
O wait, my love, till day!"

XXXIV.

"Look here, look here—the moon shines clear—
Full fast I ween we ride;
Mount and away! for ere the day
We reach our bridal-bed.

XXXV.

"The black barb snorts, the bridle rings;
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee!
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee."

XXXVI.

Strong love prevail'd: She busks, she bounes,
She mounts the barb behind,
And round her darling William's waist
Her lily arms she twined.

XXXVII.

And hurry! hurry! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be;
Spurn'd from the courser's thundering heels
The flashing pebbles flee.

XXXVIII.

And on the right, and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view,
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,
And cot and castle flew.

XXXIX.

"Sit fast—dost fear?—the moon shines clear—
Fleet rides my barb—keep hold!
Fear'st thou?"—"O no!" she faintly said;
"But why so stern and cold?

XL.

"What yonder rings? what yonder sings?
Why shrieks the owlet gray?"
"'Tis death-bells clang, 'tis funeral song,
The body to the clay.

XLI.

"With song and clang, at morrow's dawn,
We may inter the dead:
To-night I ride, with my young bride,
To deck our bridal-bed.

XLII.

"Come with thy choir, thou coffin'd guest,
To swell our nuptial song!
Come, priest, to bless our marriage-feast!
Come all, come all along!"

XLIII.

Ceased clang and song; down sunk the bier;
The shrouded corpse arose:
And hurry, hurry! all the train
The thund'ring steed pursues.

XLIV.

And forward! forward! on they go;
High snorts the straining steed;
Thick pants the rider's laboring breath,
As headlong on they speed.

XLV.

"O William, why this savage haste?
And where thy bridal-bed?"—
"'Tis distant far."—"Still short and stern?"
"'Tis narrow, trustless maid."

XLVI.

"No room for me?"—"Enough for both;—
Speed, speed, my Barb, thy course."
O'er thund'ring bridge, through boiling surge,
He drove the furious horse.

XLVII.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode;
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright,
The flashing pebbles flee.

XLVIII.

Fled fast on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower;
On right and left fled past how fast
Each city, town, and tower.

XLIX.

"Dost fear? dost fear?—The moon shines clear;—
Dost fear to ride with me?—
Hurrah! hurrah! The dead can ride!"—
"O William, let them be!

L.

"See there, see there! What yonder swings
And creaks 'mid whistling rain?"—
"Gibbet and steel, th' accursed wheel;
A murd'rer in his chain.

LI.

"Hello! thou felon, follow here:
To bridal-bed we ride;
And thou shalt prance a fetter-dance
Before me and my bride."

LII.

And hurry, hurry! clash, clash, clash!
The wasted form descends;
And fleet as wind through hazel-bush
The wild career attends.

LIII.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode;
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

LIV.

How fled what moonshine faintly show'd!
How fled what darkness hid!
How fled the earth beneath their feet,
The heaven above their head!

LV.

"Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear
And well the dead can ride;
Does faithful Helen fear for them?"
"O leave in peace the dead!"

LVI.

"Barb! Barb! methinks I hear the cock;
The sand will soon be run:
Barb! Barb! I smell the morning air;
The race is well-nigh done."

LVII.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

LVIII.

"Hurrah! hurrah! well ride the dead;
The bride, the bride is come!
And soon we reach the bridal-bed,
For, Helen, here's my home!"

LIX.

Reluctant on its rusty hinge
Revolved an iron door,
And by the pale moon's setting beam,
Were seen a church and tower.

LX.

With many a shriek and cry, whiz round
The birds of midnight, scared;
And rustling like autumnal leaves
Unhallow'd ghosts were heard.

LXI.

O'er many a tomb and tomb-stone pale
He spurr'd the fiery horse,
Till sudden at an open grave
He check'd the wond'rous course.

LXII.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
The spur his gory heel.

LXIII.

The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mould'ring flesh the bone,
Till Helen's lily arms entwine
A ghastly skeleton!

LXIV.

The furious Barb snorts fire and foam;
And with a fearful bound
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground.

LXV.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres fleet along;
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
And howl the fun'ral song.

LXVI.

"E'en when the heart's with anguish cleft,
Revere the doom of Heaven.
Her soul is from her body reft;
Her spirit be forgiven!"

No. IV.

EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF M. G. LEWIS.

My attention was called to this subject, which is now of an old date, by reading the following passage in Medwin's "Account of some Passages in Lord Byron's latter years."

"When Walter Scott began to write poetry, which was not at a very early age, Monk Lewis corrected his verse: he understood little then of the mechanical part of the art. The Fire King, in the 'Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,' was almost all Lewis's. One of the Ballads in that work, and, except some of Leyden's, perhaps one of the best, was made from a story picked up in a stage-coach;—I mean that of 'Will Jones.'

'They boil'd Will Jones within the pot,
And not much fat had Will.'

"I hope Walter Scott did not write the review on 'Christabel;' for he certainly, in common with many of us, is indebted to Coleridge. But for him, perhaps, 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel' would never have been thought of. The line,

'Jesu Maria, shield thee well!'

is word for word from Coleridge."

There are some parts of this passage extremely mistaken and exaggerated, as generally attends any attempt to record what passes in casual conversation, which resembles, in difficulty, the experiments of the old chemists for fixing quicksilver.

The following is a specimen of my poor friend Lewis's criticism; severe enough, perhaps, but for which I was much indebted to him, as forcing upon the notice of a young and careless author criticisms which the said author's vanity made him unwilling to attend to, but which were absolutely necessary to any hope of his ultimate success.

Supposed 1799.

"THANK you for your revised "Glenfinlas." I *grumble*, but say no more on *this* subject, although I hope

you will not be so inflexible on that of your other Ballads; for I do not despair of convincing you in time, that a *bad* rhyme is, in fact, no rhyme at all. You desired me to point out my objections, leaving you at liberty to make use of them or not; and so have at "Frederic and Alice." Stanza 1st, "*kies*" and "*joys*" are not rhymes; the 1st stanza ends with "*joys;*" the 2d begins with "*joying.*" In the 4th, there is too sudden a change of tenses, "*flows*" and "*rose.*" 6th, 7th, and 8th, I like much. 9th, Does not "*ring his ears*" sound ludicrous in yours? The first idea that presents itself is, that his ears were pulled; but even *the ringing of the ears* does not please. 12th, "*Shower*" and "*roar,*" not rhymes. "*Soil*" and "*aisle,*" in the 13th, are not much better; but "*head*" and "*descried*" are execrable. In the 14th, "*bar*" and "*stair*" are ditto; and "*groping*" is a nasty word. *Vide* Johnson, "*He gropes his breeches with a monarch's air.*" In the 15th, you change your metre, which has always an unpleasant effect; and "*safe*" and "*receive*" rhyme just about as well as Scott and Lewis would. 16th, "*within*" and "*strain*" are not rhymes. 17th, "*hear*" and "*air,*" not rhymes. 18th, two metres are mixed; the same objection to the third line of the 19th. Observe, that, in the Ballad, I do not always object to a variation of metre; but then it ought to increase the melody whereas, in my opinion, in these instances, it is diminished.

"THE CHASE.—12th, The 2d line reads very harshly and "*choir*" and "*lore*" are not rhymes. 13th, "*Rides*" and "*side*" are not rhymes. 30th, "*Pour*" and "*obscure,*" not rhymes. 40th, "*Spreads*" and "*invades*" are not rhymes. 46th, "Rends" and "*ascend*" are not rhymes.

"WILLIAM AND HELEN.—In order that I may bring it nearer the original title, pray introduce, in the first stanza, the name of *Ellenora*, instead of Ellen. "*Crusade*" and "*sped,*" not rhymes in the 2d. 3d, "*Mode*" and "*shed*" are not rhymes; and if they were, come too close to the rhymes in the 2d. In the 4th, "*Joy*" and "*victory*" are not rhymes. 7th, The first line wants a verb, otherwise is not intelligible. 13th,

"*Grace*" and "*bliss*" are not rhymes. 14th, "*Bale*" and "*hell*" are not rhymes. 16th, "*Vain*" and "*fruitless*" is tautology; and as a verb is wanted, the line will run better thus, "And vain is every prayer." 19th, Is not "*to her*" absolutely necessary in the 4th line? 20th, "*Grace*" and "*bliss*," not rhymes. 21st, "*Bale*" and "*hell*," not rhymes. 22d, I do not like the word "*spent*." 23d, "*O'er*" and "*star*" are vile rhymes. 26th, A verb is wanted in the 4th line; better thus, "Then whispers thus a voice." 28th, Is not, "is't thou, my love?" better than "My love! my love!" 31st, If "*wight*" means, as I conjecture, "*enchanted*," does not this let the cat out of the bag? Ought not the spur to be *sharp* rather than *bright?* In the 4th line, "*Stay*" and "*day*" jingle together; would it not be better, "I must be gone ere day?" 32d, "*Steed*" and "*bed*" are not rhymes. 34th, "*Bride*" and "*bed*" not rhymes. 35th, "*Seat*" and "*await*," not rhymes. 39th, "*Keep hold*" and "*sit fast*" seem to *my* ear vulgar and prosaic. 40th, The 4th line is defective in point of English, and, indeed, I do not quite understand the meaning. 43d, "*Arose*" and "*pursues*" are not rhymes. 45th, I am not pleased with the epithet "*savage;* and the latter part of the stanza is, to me, unintelligible. 49th, Is it not closer to the original in line 3d to say, "Swift ride the dead?" 50th, Does the rain "whistle?" 55th, line 3d, *Does* it express, "Is Helen afraid of them?" 49th, "*Door*" and "*flower*" do not rhyme together. 60th, "*Scared*" and "*heard*" are not rhymes. 63d, "*Bone*" and "*skeleton*," not rhymes. 64th, The last line sounds ludicrous; one fancies the heroine coming down with a plump, and sprawling upon her bottom. I have now finished my *severe* examination, and pointed out every objection which I think can be suggested."

6th January, 1799.

"Wellwyn, —99.

"DEAR SCOTT,

"YOUR last Ballad reached me just as I was stepping into my chaise to go to Brocket Hall, (Lord Melbourne's,) so I took it with me, and exhibited both that and *Glenfinlas* with great success. I must not, how

ever, conceal from you, that nobody understood the *Lady* Flora of Glengyle to be a disguised demon till the catastrophe arrived; and that the opinion was universal, that some previous stanzas ought to be introduced descriptive of the nature and office of *the wayward Ladies of the Wood*. William Lambe, too, (who writes good verses himself, and, therefore, may be allowed to judge those of other people,) was decidedly for the omission of the last stanza but one. These were the only objections started. I thought it as well that you should know them, whether you attend to them or not. With regard to *St. John's Eve*, I like it much, and, instead of finding fault with its broken metre, I approve of it highly. I think, in this last Ballad, you have hit off the ancient manner better than in your former ones. Glenfinlas, for example, is more like a polished tale, than an old Ballad. But why, in verse 6th, is the Baron's helmet hacked and hewed, if (as we are given to understand) he had assassinated his enemy? Ought not *tore* to be *torn*? *Tore* seems to me not English. In verse 16th, the last line is word for word from *Gil Morrice*. 21st, "*Floor*" and "*bower*" are not rhymes," &c. &c. &c.

The gentleman noticed in the following letter, as partaker in the author's heresies respecting rhyme, had the less occasion to justify such license, as his own have been singularly accurate. Mr. Smythe is now Professor of Modern History at Cambridge.

"London, January 24, 1799.

"I MUST not omit telling you, for your own comfort, and that of all such persons as are *wicked* enough to make bad rhymes, that Mr. Smythe (a very clever man at Cambridge) took great pains the other day to convince me, not merely that a bad rhyme might pass, but that occasionally a bad rhyme was better than a good one!!!!!! I need not tell you that he left me as great an infidel on this subject as he found me.

"Ever yours,

(Signed) "M. G. LEWIS."

The next letter respects the Ballad called the "Fire

King," stated by Captain Medwin to be almost all Lewis's. This is an entire misconception. Lewis, who was very fond of his idea of four elementary kings, had prevailed on me to supply a Fire King. After being repeatedly urged to the task, I sat down to write one day after dinner, and wrote the "Fire King," as it was published in the "Tales of Wonder." The next extract gives an account of the manner in which Lewis received it, which was not very favorable; but instead of writing the greater part, he did not write a single word of it. Dr. Leyden, and another gentleman who still survives, were sitting at my side while I wrote it; nor did the occupation prevent the circulation of the bottle.

Leyden wrote a Ballad for the Cloud King, which is mentioned in the ensuing extract. But it did not answer Mat's ideas, either in the color of the wings, or some point of costume equally important; so Lewis, who was otherwise fond of the Ballad, converted it into the Elfin King, and wrote a Cloud King himself, to finish the cluster in the way desired.

There is a leading mistake in the passage from Captain Medwin. "The Minstrelsy of the Border" is spoken of, but what is meant is the "Tales of Wonder." The former work contains none of the Ballads mentioned by Mr. Medwin—the latter has them all. Indeed, the dynasty of Elemental Kings were written entirely for Mr. Lewis's publication.

My intimate friend, William Clerk, Esq. was the person who heard the legend of Bill Jones told in a mail-coach by a sea-captain, who imagined himself to have seen the ghost to which it relates. The tale was versified by Lewis himself. I forget where it was published, but certainly in no miscellany or publication of mine.

I have only to add, in allusion to the passage I have quoted, that I never wrote a word parodying either Mr. Coleridge or any one else, which, in that distinguished instance, it would have been most ungracious in me to have done; for which the reader will see reasons in

what I have said, when speaking of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel."

"London, 3d February, 1800.

"DEAR SCOTT,

"I RETURN you many thanks for your Ballad, and the Extract, and I shall be very much obliged to your friend for the "Cloud King." I must, however, make one criticism upon the Stanzas which you sent me. The Spirit, being a wicked one, must not have such delicate wings as pale blue ones. He has nothing to do with Heaven except to deface it with storms; and therefore, in "The Monk," I have fitted him with a pair of sable pinions, to which I must request your friend to adapt his Stanza. With the others I am much pleased, as I am with your *Fire King*; but every body makes the same objection to it, and expresses a wish that you had conformed your Spirit to the description given of him in "The Monk," where his office is to play the Will o' the Wisp, and lead travellers into bogs, &c. It is also objected to, his being removed from his native land, Denmark, to Palestine; and that the office assigned to him in your Ballad has nothing peculiar to the "Fire King," but would have suited Arimazes, Beelzebub, or any other evil spirit, as well. However, the Ballad itself I think very pretty. I suppose you have heard from Bell respecting the copies of the Ballads. I was too much distrest at the time to write myself."

No. V.

EXTRACT FROM REMARKS ON POPULAR POETRY, AND ON THE VARIOUS COLLECTIONS OF BALLADS OF BRITAIN; PREFIXED TO THE NEW EDITION OF THE MINSTRELSY OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER.

It is here the purpose of the author to mention the fate of some previous attempts to collect ballad poetry, and the principles of selection and publication which have been adopted by various editors of learning and information; and although the present work chiefly regards the Ballads of Scotland, yet the investigation must necessarily include some of the principal collections among the English also.

Of manuscript records of ancient ballads, very few have been yet discovered. It is probable that the minstrels, seldom knowing either how to read or write, trusted to their well-exercised memories. Nor was it a difficult task to acquire a sufficient stock in trade for their purpose, since the Author has not only known many persons capable of retaining a very large collection of legendary lore of this kind, but there was a period in his own life, when a memory that ought to have been charged with more valuable matter, enabled him to recollect as many of these old songs as would have occupied several days in the recitation.

The press, however, at length superseded the necessity of such portentous exertions of recollection, and sheafs of ballads issued from it weekly, for the amusement of the sojourners at the ale-house, and the lovers of poetry in grange and hall, where such of the audience as could not read, had it at least read unto them. These fugitive leaves, generally printed upon broadsides, or in small miscellanies called Garlands, and circulating amongst persons of loose and careless habits—so far as books were concerned—were subject to destruction from many causes; and as the editions in the early age of printing were probably much limited, even those published as chap-books in the early part of the 18th century, are rarely met with.

Some persons, however, seem to have had what their contemporaries probably thought the bizarre taste of gathering and preserving collections of this fugitive poetry. Hence the large collection of ballads in the Pepysian collection at Cambridge, made by that Secretary Pepys, whose Diary is so very amusing; and hence the still more valuable deposit, in three volumes folio, in which the late Duke John of Roxburghe took so much pleasure, that he was often found enlarging it with fresh acquisitions, which he pasted in and registered with his own hand.

The first attempt, however, to reprint a collection of ballads for a class of readers distinct from those for whose use the stall-copies were intended, was that of an anonymous editor of three 12mo. volumes, which appeared in London, with engravings. These volumes came out in various years, in the beginning of the 18th century.* The editor writes with some flippancy, but with the air of a person superior to the ordinary drudgery of a mere collector. His work appears to have been got up at considerable expense, and the general introductions and historical illustrations which are prefixed to the various ballads, are written with an accuracy of which such a subject had not till then been deemed worthy. The contents are not of much value, as the principal part of the collection consists of stall-ballads, neither possessing much poetical merit, nor any particular rarity or curiosity. Still this original Miscellany holds a considerable value amongst collectors; and as the three volumes—being published at different times—are seldom found together, they sell for a high price when complete.

We may now turn our eyes to Scotland, where the facility of the dialect, which cuts off the consonants in the termination of the words, so as greatly to simplify the task of rhyming, and the habits, dispositions, and manners of the people, were of old so favorable to the composition of ballad-poetry, that, had the Scot-

* The second edition of this curious and rare Miscellany, is dated in 1723.

tish songs been preserved, there is no doubt a very curious history might have been composed by means of minstrelsy only, from the reign of Alexander III. in 1285, down to the close of the Civil Wars in 1745. That materials for such a collection existed, cannot be disputed, since the Scottish historians refer to old ballads as authorities for general tradition. But their regular preservation was not to be hoped for or expected. Successive garlands of song sprung, flourished, faded, and were forgotten, in their turn; and the names of a few specimens are only preserved, to show us how abundant the display of these wild flowers had been. But, like the natural free gifts of Flora, these poetical garlands can only be successfully sought for where the land is uncultivated; and civilization and increase of learning are sure to banish them, as the plow of the agriculturalist bears down the mountain daisy.

Yet it is to be recorded with some interest, that the earliest surviving specimen of the Scottish press, is a Miscellany of Millar and Chapman, which preserves a considerable fund of Scottish popular poetry, and among the rest, by far the best specimen of the gests of Robin Hood, the "English balladmaker's joy," and whose renown seems to have been as freshly preserved in the north as on the southern shores of the Tweed. There were probably several collections of Scottish ballads and metrical pieces during the seventeenth century. A very fine one, belonging to Lord Montagu, perished in the fire which consumed Ditton House, about twenty years ago.

James Watson, in 1706, published, at Edinburgh, a miscellaneous collection in three parts, containing some ancient poetry. But the first editor who seems to have made a determined effort to preserve our ancient popular poetry, was the well-known Allan Ramsay, in his Evergreen, containing chiefly extracts from the ancient Scottish Makers, whose poems have been preserved in the Bannatyne Manuscript, but exhibiting amongst them some popular ballads. Amongst these is the *Battle of the Harlaw*, apparently from a modernized copy, being probably the most ancient

Scottish historical ballad of any length now in existence.* He also inserted in the same collection, the genuine Scottish border-ballad of *Johnnie Armstrong*, copied from the recitation of a descendant of the unfortunate hero, in the sixth generation. This poet also included in the Evergreen, Hardyknute, which, though evidently modern, is a most spirited and beautiful imitation of the ancient ballad. In a subsequent collection of lyrical pieces, called the Tea-Table Miscellany, Allan Ramsay inserted several old ballads, such as *Cruel Barbara Allan*, *The Bonnie Earl of Murray*, *There came a Ghost to Margaret's door*, and two or three others. But his unhappy plan of writing new words to old tunes, without at the same time preserving the ancient verses, led him, with the assistance of "some ingenious young gentlemen," to throw aside many originals, the preservation of which would have been much more interesting than any thing which has been substituted in their stead.†

* That there was such an ancient ballad is certain, and the tune, adapted to the bagpipes, was long extremely popular, and, within the remembrance of man, the first which was played at kirns and rustic festivals. But there is a suspicious phrase in the ballad as it is published by Allan Ramsay. When describing the national confusion, the bard says,

> Sen the days of auld King Hairie,
> Such slauchter was not heard or seen.

Quære, who was the "auld King Hairie" here meant? If Henry VIII. be intended, as is most likely, it must bring the date of the poem, at least of that verse, as low as Queen Mary's time. The ballad is said to have been printed in 1668. A copy of that edition would be a great curiosity.

† Green be the pillow of honest Allan, at whose lamp Burns lighted his brilliant torch! It is without enmity to his memory that we record his mistake in this matter. But it is impossible not to regret that such an affecting tale as that of Bessie Bell and Mary Gray should have fallen into his hands. The southern reader must learn, (for what northern reader is ignorant?) that these two beautiful women were kinsfolk, and so strictly united in friendship, that even personal jealousy could not interrupt their union. They were visited by a handsome and agreeable young man, who was acceptable to them both, but so captivated with their charms, that, while confident of a preference on the part of both, he was unable to make a choice between them. While this singular situation of the three persons of the tale

In fine, the task of collecting and illustrating ancient popular poetry, whether in England or Scotland,

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continued, the breaking out of the plague forced the two ladies to take refuge in the beautiful valley of Lynedoch, where they built themselves a bower, in order to avoid human intercourse, and the danger of infection. The lover was not included in their renunciation of society. He visited their retirement, brought with him the fatal disease, and unable to return to Perth, which was his usual residence, was nursed by the fair friends with all the tenderness of affection. He died, however, having first communicated the infection to his lovely attendants. They followed him to the grave, lovely in their lives, and undivided in their death. Their burial-place, in the vicinity of the bower which they built, is still visible, in the romantic vicinity of Lord Lyndoch's mansion, and prolongs the memory of female friendship, which even rivalry could not dissolve. Two stanzas of the original ballad alone survive:

Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They were twa bonnie lasses;
They bigged a bower on yon burn-brae,
And theeckit it ower wi' rashes.

* * * *

They wadna rest in Methven kirk,
Among their gentle kin;
But they wad lie in Lednoch braes,
To beek against the sun.

There is, to a Scottish ear, so much tenderness and simplicity in these verses, as must induce us to regret that the rest should have been superseded by a pedantic modern song, turning upon the most unpoetic part of the legend, the hesitation, namely, of the lover, which of the ladies to prefer. One of the most touching expressions in the song, is the following exclamation:

"Oh, Jove! she's like thy Pallas."

Another song, of which Ramsay chose a few words for the theme of a rifacimento, seems to have been a curious specimen of minstrel recitation. It was partly verse, partly narrative, and was alternately sung and repeated. The story was the escape of a young gentleman, pursued by a cruel uncle, desirous of his estate; or a bloody rival, greedy of his life; or the relentless father of his lady-love, or some such remorseless character, having sinister intentions on the person of the fugitive. The object of his rapacity or vengeance being nearly overtaken, a shepherd undertakes to mislead the pursuer, who comes in sight just as the object of his pursuit disappears, and greets the shepherd thus:—

PURSUER.

Good morrow, shepherd, and my friend,
Saw you a young man this way riding;

was never executed by a competent person, possessing the necessary powers of selection and annotation, till it was undertaken by Dr. Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore in Ireland. This reverend gentleman, himself a poet, and ranking high among the literati of the day, commanding access to the individuals and institutions which could best afford him materials, gave the public the result of his researches in a work entitled "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," in three volumes, published in London, 1765, which has since gone through four editions. The taste with which the materials were chosen, the extreme felicity with which they were illustrated, the display at once of antiquarian knowledge and classical reading which the collection indicated, render it difficult to imitate, and impossible to excel, a work which must always be held among the first of its class in point of merit, though not actually the foremost in point of time. But neither the high character of the work, nor the rank and respectability of the author, could protect him or his labors from the invidious attacks of criticism.

The most formidable of these were directed by Joseph Ritson, a man of acute observation, profound research, and great labor. These valuable attributes were unhappily combined with an eager irritability of temper, which induced him to treat antiquarian trifles

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With long black hair, on a bob-tail mare,
And I know that I cannot be far behind him!

THE SHEPHERD.

Yes, I did see him this way riding,
And what did much surprise my wit,
The man and the mare flew up in the air,
And I see, and I see, and I see her yet,
Behind yon white cloud I see her tail wave,
And I see, and I see, and I see her yet.

The tune of these verses is an extraordinary good one, and Allan Ramsay has adapted a bacchanalian song to it with some success; but we should have thanked him much had he taken the trouble to preserve the original legend of the old minstrel. The valued and venerable friend to whom we owe this mutilated account of it, has often heard it sung among the High Jinks of Scottish lawyers of the last generation.

with the same seriousness which men of the world reserve for matters of importance, and disposed him to drive controversies into personal quarrels, by neglecting, in literary debate, the courtesies of ordinary society.* It ought to be said, however, by one who knew him well, that this irritability of disposition was a constitutional and physical, not a moral defect; and that Ritson's extreme attachment to the severity of truth, corresponded to the rigor of his criticisms upon the labors of others. He seems to have attacked Bishop Percy with the greater animosity, as bearing no good will to the hierarchy, in which that prelate held a distinguished place.

Ritson's criticism, in which there was too much horse-play, was grounded on two points of accusation. The first regarded Dr. Percy's definition of the order and office of minstrels, which Ritson considered as designedly overcharged, for the sake of giving an undue importance to his subject. The second objection respected the liberties which Dr. Percy had taken with his materials, in adding to, retrenching, and improving them, so as to bring them nearer to the taste of his own period. We will take some brief notice of both topics.

First, Dr. Percy, in the first edition of his work, certainly laid himself open to the charge of having given an inaccurate, and somewhat exaggerated account, of the English Minstrels, whom he defined to be an "order of men in the middle ages, who subsisted

* For example, in quoting a popular song, well known by the name of Maggie Lauder, the editor of the Reliques had given a line of the Dame's address to the merry minstrel, thus:

Gin ye be Rob, I've heard of you,
You dwell upon the border.

Ritson insisted the genuine reading was,

Come ye frae the border?

And he expatiates with great keenness on the crime of the Bishop's having sophisticated the text, of which he produced no evidence to favor his opinion, that the Borders were a favorite abode of the minstrels of both kingdoms. The fact, it is believed, is undoubted, and the one reading seems to support it as well as the other.

by the arts of poetry and music, and sung to the harp the verses which they themselves composed." The reverend editor of the Reliques produced in support of this definition many curious quotations, to show that in many instances the persons of these minstrels had been honored and respected, their performances applauded and rewarded by the great and the courtly, and their craft imitated by princes themselves.

Against both these propositions, Ritson made a determined opposition. He contended, and probably with justice, that the minstrels were not necessarily poets, or in the regular habit of composing the verses which they sung to the harp; and indeed, that the word *minstrel*, in its ordinary acceptation, meant no more than musician.

Dr. Percy, in an amended edition of his Essay on Minstrelsy, prefixed to the fourth edition of the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, seems to have been, to a certain point, convinced by the critic's reasoning; for he has extended the definition impugned by Ritson, and the minstrels are thus described as singing verses composed by themselves or *others*. This we apprehend to be a tenable position; for, as on the one hand it seems too broad an averment to say that all minstrels were by profession poets, so on the other, it is extravagant to affirm that men who were constantly in the habit of reciting verse, should not frequently have acquired that of composing it, especially when their bread depended on giving pleasure; and to have the power of producing novelty, is a great step towards that desirable end. No unprejudiced reader, therefore, can have any hesitation in adopting Bishop Percy's definition of the minstrels, and their occupation, as qualified in the fourth edition of his Essay, implying that they were sometimes poets, sometimes the mere reciters of the poetry of others.

Of the critic's second proposition, Dr. Percy successfully showed, that at no period of history was the word minstrel applied to instrumental music exclusively; and he has produced sufficient evidence, that the talents of the profession were as frequently employed

in chanting or reciting poetry as in playing the mere tunes. There is an appearance of a distinction being sometimes made between minstrel recitations and minstrelsy of music alone; and we may add a curious instance, to those quoted by the Bishop. It is from the singular ballad respecting Thomas of Erceldoune,* which announces the proposition, that *tongue* is chief of minstrelsy.

We may also notice, that the word minstrel being in fact derived from the Minné-singer of the Germans, means, in its primary sense, one who sings of love, a sense totally inapplicable to a mere instrumental musician.

A second general point on which Dr. Percy was fiercely attacked by Mr. Ritson, was also one on which both the parties might claim a right to sing *Te Deum*. It respected the rank or *status* which was held by the minstrels in society during the middle ages. On this point the editor of the Reliques of Ancient Poetry had produced the most satisfactory evidence, that, at the courts of the Anglo-Norman princes the professors of the gay science were the favorite solacers of the leisure hours of princes, who did not themselves disdain to share their tuneful labors, and imitate their compositions. Mr. Ritson replied to this with great ingenuity, arguing, that such instances of respect paid to French minstrels reciting in their native language in the court of Norman monarchs, though held in Britain, argued nothing in favor of English artists professing the same trade; and of whose compositions, and not of those existing in the French language, Dr. Percy professed to form his collection. The reason of the distinction betwixt the respectability of the French minstrels, and the degradation of the same class of men in England, Mr. Ritson plausibly alleged to be, that the English language, a mixed speech betwixt Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French, was not known at the court of the Anglo-Norman kings until the reign of Edward III.;†

* Select Remains of Popular Pieces of Poetry. Edinburgh, 1822.

† That monarch first used the vernacular English dialect in a motto which he displayed on his shield at a celebrated tournament

and that, therefore, until a very late period, and when the lays of minstrelsy were going out of fashion, English performers in that capacity must have confined the exercise of their talents to the amusement of the vulgar. Now, as it must be conceded to Mr. Ritson, that almost all the English metrical romances which have been preserved till the present day, are translated from the French, it may also be allowed, that a class of men employed chiefly in rendering into English the works of others, could not hold so high a station as those who aspired to original composition; and so far the critic has the best of the dispute. But Mr. Ritson has overdriven his argument, since there was assuredly a period in English history, when the national minstrels, writing in the national dialect, were, in proportion to their merit in their calling, held in honor and respect.

Thomas the Rhymer, for example, a minstrel who flourished in the end of the twelfth century, was not only a man of talent in his art, but of some rank in society; the companion of nobles, and himself a man of landed property. He, and his contemporary Kendal, wrote, as we are assured by Robert de Brunne, in a passage already alluded to, a kind of English, which was designed for "pride and noblaye," and not for such inferior persons as Robert himself addressed, and to whose comprehension he avowedly lowered his language and structure of versification. There existed, therefore, during the time of this historian, a more refined dialect of the English language, used by such composers of popular poetry as moved in a higher circle; and there can be no doubt, that while their productions were held in such high esteem, the authors must have been honored in proportion.

The education bestowed upon James I. of Scotland, when brought up under the charge of Henry IV., comprehended both music and the art of vernacular poetry;

The legend which graced the representation of a white swan on the king's buckler, ran thus:—

Ha! ha! the whyte swan!
By Goddis soule I am thy man.

in other words, Minstrelsy in both branches. That poetry, of which the King left several specimens, was, as is well known, English; nor is it to be supposed that a prince, upon whose education such sedulous care was bestowed, would have been instructed in an art, which, if we are to believe Mr. Ritson, was degraded to the last degree, and discreditable to its professors. The same argument is strengthened by the poetical exercises of the Duke of Orleans, in English, written during his captivity after the battle of Agincourt.* It could not be supposed that the noble prisoner was to solace his hours of imprisonment with a degrading and vulgar species of composition.

We could produce other instances to show that this acute critic has carried his argument considerably too far. But we prefer taking a general view of the subject, which seems to explain clearly how contradictory evidence should exist on it, and why instances of great personal respect to individual minstrels, and a high esteem of the art, are quite reconcilable with much contempt thrown on the order at large.

All professors of the fine arts—all those who contribute, not to the necessities of life, but to the enjoyments of society, hold their professional respectability by the severe tenure of exhibiting excellence in their department. We are well enough satisfied with the tradesman who goes through his task in a workmanlike manner, nor are we disposed to look down upon the divine, the lawyer, or the physician, unless they display gross ignorance of their profession: we hold it enough, that if they do not possess the highest knowledge of their respective sciences, they can at least instruct us on the points we desire to know. But

——— mediocribus esse poetis
Non dî, non homines, non concessere columnæ.

The same is true respecting the professors of painting, of sculpture, of music, and the fine arts in general. If they exhibit paramount excellence, no situa-

* See the edition printed by Mr. Watson Taylor, for the Roxburghe Club.

tion in society is too high for them which their manners enable them to fill; if they fall short of the highest point of aim, they degenerate into sign-painters, stone-cutters, common crowders, doggerel rhymers, and so forth, the most contemptible of mankind. The reason of this is evident. Men must be satisfied with such a supply of their actual wants as can be obtained in the circumstances, and should an individual want a coat, he must employ the village tailor, if Stultze is not to be had. But if he seeks for delight, the case is quite different; and he that cannot hear Pasta or Sontag, would be little solaced for the absence of these sirens, by the strains of a crack-voiced ballad-singer. Nay, on the contrary, the offer of such inadequate compensation, would only be regarded as an insult, and resented accordingly.

The theatre affords the most appropriate example of what we mean. The first circles in society are open to persons eminently distinguished in the drama; and their rewards are, in proportion to those who profess the useful arts, incalculably higher. But those who lag in the rear of the dramatic art, are proportionally poorer and more degraded than those who are the lowest of a useful trade or profession. These instances will enable us readily to explain why the greater part of the minstrels, practising their professions in scenes of vulgar mirth and debauchery, humbling their art to please the ears of drunken clowns, and living with the dissipation natural to men whose precarious subsistence is, according to the ordinary phrase, from hand to mouth only, should fall under general contempt, while the *stars* of the profession, to use a modern phrase, looked down on them from the distant empyrean, as the planets do upon those shooting exhalations arising from gross vapors in the nether atmosphere.

The debate, therefore, resembles the apologue of the gold and silver shield. Dr. Percy looked on the minstrel in the palmy and exalted state to which, no doubt, many were elevated by their talents, like those who possess excellence in the fine arts in the present day; and Ritson considered the reverse of the medal,

when the poor and wandering glee-man was glad to purchase his bread by singing his ballads at the ale-house, wearing a fantastic habit, and latterly sinking into a mere crowder upon an untuned fiddle, accompanying his rude strains with a ruder ditty, the helpless associate of drunken revellers, and marvellously afraid of the constable and parish-beadle.* The difference betwixt those holding the extreme positions of highest and lowest in such a profession, cannot surely be more marked than that which separated David Garrick or John Kemble from the outcasts of a strolling company, exposed to penury, indigence, and prosecution according to law.

There was still another and more important subject of debate, between Dr. Percy and his hostile critic. The former, as a poet and a man of taste, was tempted to take such freedoms with his original ballads, as might enable him to please a more critical age than that in which they were composed. Words were there altered, phrases improved, and whole verses were inserted or omitted at pleasure.

Such freedoms were especially taken with the poems published from a folio manuscript in Dr. Percy's own

* In Fletcher's comedy of "Monsieur Thomas," such a fiddler is questioned as to the ballads he is best versed in, and replies—

Under your mastership's correction, I can sing,
"The Duke of Norfolk," or the merry ballad
Of "Divine and Lazarus;" "The Rose of England;"
"In Crete, where Dedimus first began;"
"Jonas his crying out against Coventry."
Thomas. Excellent!
Rare matters all.
Fiddler. "Mawdlin the Merchant's Daughter;"
"The Devil and ye Dainty Dames."
Thomas. Rare still.
Fiddler. "The Landing of the Spaniards at Bow,
With the bloody battle at Mile-end."

The poor minstrel is described as accompanying the young rake in his revels. Launcelot describes

The gentleman himself, young Monsieur Thomas,
Errant with his furious myrmidons;
The *fiery fiddler* and myself—now singing,
Now beating at the doors, &c.

possession, very curious from the miscellaneous nature of its contents, but unfortunately having many of the leaves mutilated, and injured in other respects, by the gross carelessness and ignorance of the transcriber. Anxious to avail himself of the treasures which this manuscript contained, the editor of the Reliques did not hesitate to repair and renovate the songs which he drew from this corrupted yet curious source, and to accommodate them with such emendations as might recommend them to the modern taste.

For these liberties with his subject, Ritson censured Dr. Percy in the most uncompromising terms, accused him, in violent language, of interpolation and forgery, and insinuated that there existed no such thing *in rerum natura* as that folio manuscript, so often referred to as the authority of originals inserted in the Reliques. In this charge, the eagerness of Ritson again betrayed him farther than judgment and discretion, as well as courtesy, warranted. It is no doubt highly desirable that the text of ancient poetry should be given untouched and uncorrupted. But this is a point which did not occur to the editor of the Reliques in 1765, whose object it was to win the favor of the public, at a period when the great difficulty was not how to secure the very words of old ballads, but how to arrest the public attention upon the subject at all. That great and important service to national literature would probably never have been attained without the work of Dr. Percy; a work which first fixed the consideration of his readers on ancient poetry, and made it worth while to inquire how far its graces were really antique, or how far derived from the taste with which the publication had been superintended and revised. The object of Dr. Percy was certainly intimated in several parts of his work, where he ingenuously acknowledges, that certain ballads have received emendations, and that others are not of pure and unmixed antiquity; that the beginning of some and end of others have been supplied; and upon the whole, that he has, in many instances, decorated the ancient ballads with the graces of a more refined period.

This system is so distinctly intimated, that if there be any critic still of opinion, like poor Ritson, whose morbid temperament led him to such a conclusion, that the crime of literary imitation is equal to that of commercial forgery, he ought to recollect that guilt, in the latter case, does not exist without a corresponding charge of uttering the forged document, or causing it to be uttered, as genuine, without which the mere imitation is not culpable, at least not criminally so. This quality is totally awanting in the accusation so roughly brought against Dr. Percy, who avowedly indulged in such alterations and improvements upon his materials, as might adapt them to the taste of an age not otherwise disposed to bestow its attention on them.

We have to add, that, in the fourth edition of the Reliques, Mr. Thomas Percy of St. John's College, Oxford, pleading the cause of his uncle with the most gentlemanlike moderation, and with every respect to Mr. Ritson's science and talents, has combated the critic's opinion, without any attempt to retort his injurious language.

It would be now, no doubt, desirable to have had some more distinct account of Dr. Percy's folio manuscript and its contents; and Mr. Thomas Percy, accordingly, gives the original of the Marriage of Sir Gawain, and collates it with the copy published in a complete state by his uncle, who has on this occasion given entire rein to his own fancy, though the rude origin of most of his ideas is to be found in the old ballad. There is also given a copy of that elegant metrical tale, "The Child of Elle," as it exists in the folio manuscript, which goes far to show it has derived all its beauties from Dr. Percy's poetical powers. Judging from these two specimens, we can easily conceive why the Reverend Editor of the "Reliques" should have declined, by the production of the folio manuscript, to furnish his severe Aristarch with weapons against him, which he was sure would be unsparingly used. Yet it is certain, the manuscript contains much that is really excellent, though mutilated and sophisticated. A copy of the fine ballad of "Sir Cau-

lin" is found in a Scottish shape, under the name of "King Malcolm and Sir Colvin," in Buchan's North Country Ballads, to be presently mentioned. It is, therefore, unquestionably ancient, though possibly retouched, and perhaps with the addition of a second part, of which the Scottish copy has no vestiges. It would certainly be desirable to know to what extent Dr. Percy had used the license of an editor, in these and other cases; and certainly, at this period, would be only a degree of justice due to his memory.

On the whole, we may dismiss the "Reliques of Ancient Poetry" with the praise and censure conferred on it by a gentleman, himself a valuable laborer in the vineyard of antiquities. "It is the most elegant compilation of the early poetry that has ever appeared in any age or country. But it must be frankly added, that so numerous are the alterations and corrections, that the severe antiquary, who desires to see the old English ballads in a genuine state, must consult a more accurate edition than this celebrated work."*

Of Ritson's own talents as an editor of ancient poetry, we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. The first collector who followed the example of Dr. Percy, was Mr. T. Evans, bookseller, father of the gentleman we have just quoted. His old ballads, historical and narrative, with some of modern date, appeared in two volumes, in 1777, and were eminently successful. In 1784, a second edition appeared, extending the work to four volumes. In this collection, many ballads found acceptance which Bishop Percy had not considered as possessing sufficient merit to claim admittance into the Reliques. The 8vo Miscellany of 1723 yielded a great part of the materials. The collection of Evans contained several modern pieces of great merit, which are not to be found elsewhere, and which are understood to be the production of William Julius Mickle, translator of the Lusiad, though they were never claimed by him, nor received among his works. Amongst them is the elegiac poem of Cumnor Hall, which suggested

* Introduction to Evans's Ballads, 1810. New edition, enlarged, &c.

the fictitious narrative entitled Kenilworth. The Red-Cross Knight also, by Mickle, which has furnished words for a beautiful glee, first occurred in the same collection. As Mickle, with a vein of great facility, united a power of verbal melody which might have been envied by bards of much greater renown,* he must be considered as very successful in these efforts, if the ballads be regarded as avowedly modern. If they are to be judged of as accurate imitations of ancient poetry, they have less merit; the deception being only maintained by a huge store of double consonants, strewed at random into ordinary words, resembling ancient orthography as little as the niches, turrets, and tracery of plaster stuck upon a modern front. In the year 1810, the four volumes of 1764 were republished by Mr. R. H. Evans, the son of the original editor, with very considerable alterations and additions. In this last edition, the more ordinary modern ballads were judiciously retrenched in number, and large and valuable additions made to the ancient part of the collection. Being in some measure a supplement to the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, this miscellany cannot be dispensed with on the shelves of any bibliomaniac who

* In evidence of what is above stated, the author would quote the introductory stanza to a forgotten poem of Mickle, originally published under the injudicious and equivocal title of "The Concubine," but in subsequent editions called, "Sir Martyn, or, The Progress of Dissipation."

> Awake, ye west winds, through the lonely dale,
> And, Fancy, to thy faery bower betake;
> Even now, with balmy sweetness breathes the gale,
> Dimpling with downy wing the stilly lake;
> Through the pale willows faltering whispers wake,
> And evening comes with locks bedropp'd with dew;
> On Desmond's mouldering turrets, slowly shake
> The wither'd ryegrass, and the hairbel blue,
> And ever and anon sweet Mulla's plaints renew,

Mickle's facility of versification was so great, that, being a printer by profession, he frequently put his verses into types without taking the trouble previously to put them into writing; thus uniting the composition of the author with the mechanical operation which typographers call by the same name.

may choose to emulate Captain Cox of Coventry, the prototype of all collectors of popular poetry.

While Dr. Percy was setting the example of a classical publication of ancient English poetry, the late David Herd was, in modest retirement, compiling a collection of Scottish Songs, which he has happily described as the poetry and music of the heart. The first part of the Miscellany contains heroic and historical ballads, of which there is a respectable and well-chosen selection. Mr. Herd, an accountant, as the profession is called in Edinburgh, was known and generally esteemed for his shrewd, manly common sense and antiquarian science, mixed with much good-nature and great modesty. His hardy and antique mould of countenance, and his venerable grizzled locks, procured him, amongst his acquaintance, the name of Graysteil. His collection of songs, in two 8vo. volumes, appeared in 1776. A publication of the same kind, being Herd's book something enlarged, was printed for Lawrie and Symington in 1791. Some additions occur in this later work, of which by far the most valuable were two fine imitations of the Scottish ballad, by the gifted author of the Man of Feeling, called "Duncan" and "Kenneth."

John Pinkerton, a man of considerable learning, and some severity as well as acuteness of disposition, was now endeavoring to force himself into public attention; and his collection of Select Ballads, London, 1783, contains sufficient evidence that he understood, in an extensive sense, Horace's maxim, *quidlibet audendi*. As he was possessed of considerable powers of poetry, though not equal to the extent he was willing to take credit for, he was resolved to enrich his collection with all the novelty and interest which it could derive from a liberal insertion of pieces dressed in the garb of antiquity, but equipped from the wardrobe of the editor's imagination. With a boldness, suggested perhaps by the success of Mr. Macpherson, he included, within a collection amounting to only twenty-one tragic ballads, no less than five, of which he afterwards owned himself to have been altogether, or in great part, the

author. The most remarkable article in this Miscellany was, a second part to the noble ballad of Hardyknute, which has some good verses. It labors, however, under this great defect, that, in order to append his own conclusion to the original tale, Mr. Pinkerton found himself under the necessity of altering a leading circumstance in the old ballad, which would have rendered his catastrophe inapplicable. With such license, to write continuations and conclusions would be no difficult task. In the second volume of the Select Ballads, consisting of comic pieces, a list of fifty-two articles contained nine written entirely by the editor himself. Of the manner in which these supposititious compositions are executed, it may be briefly stated, that they are the work of an antiquary much better acquainted with ancient books and manuscripts, than with oral tradition and popular legends. The poetry smells of the lamp; and it may be truly said, that if ever a ballad had existed in such quaint language as the author employs, it could never have been so popular as to be preserved by oral tradition. The glossary displays a much greater acquaintance with learned lexicons, than with the familiar dialect still spoken by the Lowland Scottish, and it is, of course, full of errors.* Neither was Mr. Pinkerton more happy in the way of conjectural illustration. He chose to fix on Sir John Bruce of Kinross, the paternity of the ballad of Hardyknute, and of the fine poem called the Vision. The first is due to Mrs. Halket of Wardlaw, the second to Allan Ramsay, although, it must be owned, it is of a character superior to his ordinary poetry. Sir John Bruce was a brave, blunt soldier, who made no pretence whatever to literature, though his daughter, Mrs. Bruce of Arnot, had much talent, a circumstance which may perhaps have misled the antiquary.

Mr. Pinkerton read a sort of recantation, in a List

* *Banstera*, for example, a word generally applied to the men, on a harvest-field, who bind the sheaves, is derived from *ban*, to curse, and explained to mean, blustering, swearing fellows.

of Scottish Poets, prefixed to a Selection of Poems from the Maitland Manuscript, vol. i. 1786, in which he acknowledges, as his own composition, the pieces of spurious antiquity included in his "Select Ballads," with a coolness which, when his subsequent invectives against others who had taken similar liberties is considered, infers as much audacity as the studied and labored defence of obscenity with which he disgraced the same pages.

In the mean time, Joseph Ritson, a man of diligence and acumen equal to those of Pinkerton, but of the most laudable accuracy and fidelity as an editor, was engaged in various publications respecting poetical antiquities, in which he employed profound research. A select collection of English Songs was compiled by him, with great care and considerable taste, and published at London, 1783. A new edition of this has appeared since Ritson's death, sanctioned by the name of the learned and indefatigable antiquary, Thomas Park, and augmented with many original pieces, and some which Ritson had prepared for publication.

Ritson's Collection of Songs was followed by a curious volume, entitled, "Ancient Songs from the time of Henry III. to the Revolution," 1790. "Pieces of Ancient Popular Poetry," 1792. "A collection of Scottish Songs, with the genuine music," London, 1794. This is a genuine, but rather meagre collection of Caledonian popular songs. Next year Mr. Ritson published "Robin Hood," 2 vols., 1795, being "A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs, and Ballads now extant, relative to that celebrated Outlaw." This work is a notable illustration of the excellencies and defects of Mr. Ritson's system. It is almost impossible to conceive so much zeal, research, and industry bestowed on a subject of antiquity. There scarcely occurs a phrase or word relating to Robin Hood, whether in history or poetry, in law-books, in ancient proverbs, or common parlance, but it is here collected and explained. At the same time, the extreme fidelity of the editor seems driven to excess, when we find him pertinaciously retaining all the nu-

merous and gross errors which repeated recitations have introduced into the text, and regarding it as a sacred duty to prefer the worst to the better readings, as if their inferiority was a security for their being genuine. In short, when Ritson copied from rare books, or ancient manuscripts, there could not be a more accurate editor; when taking his authority from oral tradition, and judging between two recited copies, he was apt to consider the worst as most genuine, as if a poem was not more likely to be deteriorated than improved by passing through the mouths of many reciters. In the Ballads of Robin Hood, this superstitious scrupulosity was especially to be regretted, as it tended to enlarge the collection with a great number of doggerel compositions, which are all copies of each other, turning on the same idea of Bold Robin meeting with a shepherd, a tinker, a mendicant, a tanner, &c. &c. by each and all of whom he is soundly thrashed, and all of whom he receives into his band. The tradition, which avers that it was the brave outlaw's custom to try a bout at quarter-staff with his young recruits, might indeed have authorized one or two such tales, but the greater part ought to have been rejected, as modern imitations of the most paltry kind, composed probably about the age of James I. of England. By adopting this spurious trash as part of Robin Hood's history, he is represented as the best cudgelled hero, Don Quixote excepted, that ever was celebrated in prose or rhyme. Ritson also published several garlands of North Country songs.

Looking on this eminent antiquary's labors in a general point of view, we may deprecate the eagerness and severity of his prejudices, and feel surprise that he should have shown so much irritability of disposition on such a topic as a collection of old ballads, which certainly have little in them to affect the passions; and we may be sometimes provoked at the pertinacity with which he has preferred bad readings to good. But while industry, research, and antiquarian learning, are recommendations to works of this nature, few editors will ever be found so competent to the task as Josep'

Ritson. It must also be added to his praise, that although not willing to yield his confidence rashly, yet if he saw reason to believe that he had been mistaken in any fact or argument, he resigned his own opinion with a candor equal to the warmth with which he defended himself while confident he was in the right. Many of his works are now almost out of print, and an edition of them in common orthography, and altering the bizarre spelling and character which his prejudices induced the author to adopt, would be, to antiquaries, an acceptable present.

We have now given a hasty account of various collections of popular poetry during the eighteenth century; we have only further to observe, that, in the present century, this species of lore has been sedulously cultivated. The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, collected by the author, first appeared in 1802, in two volumes; and what may appear a singular coincidence, it was the first work printed by Mr. James Ballantyne, (then residing at Kelso,) as it was the first serious demand which the present author made on the patience of the public. The Border Minstrelsy, augmented by a third volume, came to a second edition in 1803. In 1801, Mr. John Grahame Dalzell, to whom his country is obliged for his antiquarian labors, published "Scottish Poems of the Sixteenth Century," which, among other subjects of interest, contains a curious contemporary ballad of Belrinnes, which has some stanzas of considerable merit.*

The year 1806 was distinguished by the appearance of "Popular Ballads and Songs, from Traditions, Manuscripts, and Scarce Editions, with Translations of similar Pieces from the Ancient Danish Language, and a few Originals by the Editor, Robert Jamieson, A.M.

* The first opening of the ballad has much of the martial strain with which a pibroch commences. *Properat in medias res*—according to the classical admonition.

MacCallanmore came from the west
With many a bow and brand;
To waste the Rinnes he thought it best,
The Earl of Huntley's land.

and F.A.S." This work, which was not greeted by the public with the attention it deserved, opened a new discovery respecting the original source of the Scottish ballads. Mr. Jamieson's extensive acquaintance with the Scandinavian literature, enabled him to detect not only a general similarity betwixt these and the Danish ballads preserved in the "Kiempe Viser," an early collection of heroic ballads in that language, but to demonstrate that, in many cases, the stories and songs were distinctly the same, a circumstance which no antiquary had hitherto so much as suspected. Mr. Jamieson's annotations are also very valuable, and preserve some curious illustrations of the old poets. His imitations, though he is not entirely free from the affectation of using rather too many obsolete words, are generally highly interesting. The work fills an important place in the collections of those who are addicted to this branch of antiquarian study.

Mr. John Finlay, a poet whose career was cut short by a premature death, published a short collection of "Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads," in 1808. The beauty of some imitations of the old Scottish ballad, with the good sense, learning, and modesty of the preliminary dissertations, must make all admirers of ancient lore regret the early loss of this accomplished young man.

Various valuable collections of ancient ballad-poetry have appeared of late years, some of which are illustrated with learning and acuteness, as those of Mr. Motherwell and of Mr. Kinloch intimate much taste and feeling for this species of literature. Nor is there any want of editions of ballads, less designed for public sale, than to preserve floating pieces of minstrelsy which are in immediate danger of perishing. Several of those, edited, as we have occasion to know, by men of distinguished talent, have appeared in a smaller form and more limited edition, and must soon be among the *introuvables* of Scottish typography. We would particularize a duodecimo, under the modest title of a "Ballad Book," without place or date annexed, which indicates, by a few notes only, the capacity which the

editor possesses for supplying the most extensive and ingenious illustrations upon antiquarian subjects. Most of the ballads are of a comic character, and some of them admirable specimens of Scottish dry humor. Another collection which calls for particular distinction, is in the same size, or nearly so, and bears the same title with the preceding one, the date being, Edinburgh, 1827. But the contents are announced as containing the budget, or stock-in-trade, of an old Aberdeenshire minstrel, the very last, probably, of the race, who, according to Percy's definition of the profession, sung his own compositions, and those of others, through the capital of the county, and other towns in that country of gentlemen. This man's name was Charles Leslie, but he was known more generally by the nickname of Mussel-mou'd Charlie, from a singular projection of his under lip. His death was thus announced in the newspapers for October, 1792:—"Died at Old Rain, in Aberdeenshire, aged one hundred and four years, Charles Leslie, a hawker, or ballad-singer, well known in that country by the name of Mussel-mou'd Charlie. He followed his occupation till within a few weeks of his death." Charlie was a devoted Jacobite, and so popular in Aberdeen, that he enjoyed in that city a sort of monopoly of the minstrel calling, no other person being allowed, under any pretence, to chant ballads on the causeway, or plain-stanes of "the brave burgh." Like the former collection, most of Mussel-mou'd Charlie's songs were of a jocose character.

But the most extensive and valuable additions which have been of late made to this branch of ancient literature, are the collections of Mr. Peter Buchan of Peterhead, a person of indefatigable research in that department, and whose industry has been crowned with the most successful results. This is partly owing to the country where Mr. Buchan resides, which, full as it is of minstrel relics, has been but little ransacked by any former collectors; so that, while it is a very rare event south of the Tay, to recover any ballad having a claim to antiquity, which has not been examined

and republished in some one or other of our collections of ancient poetry, those of Aberdeenshire have been comparatively little attended to. The present Editor was the first to solicit attention to these northern songs, in consequence of a collection of ballads communicated to him by his late respected friend, Lord Woodhouselee. Mr. Jamieson, in his collections of "Songs and Ballads," being himself a native of Morayshire, was able to push this inquiry much farther, and at the same time, by doing so, to illustrate his theory of the connexion between the ancient Scottish and Danish ballads, upon which the publication of Mr. Buchan throws much light. It is, indeed, the most complete collection of the kind which has yet appeared.

Of the originality of the ballads in Mr. Buchan's collection we do not entertain the slightest doubt. Several (we may instance the curious tale of "The Two Magicians") are translated from the Norse, and Mr. Buchan is probably unacquainted with the originals. Others refer to points of history, with which the editor does not seem to be familiar. It is out of no disrespect to this laborious and useful antiquary, that we observe his prose composition is rather florid, and forms, in this respect, a strong contrast to the extreme simplicity of the ballads, which gives us the most distinct assurance that he has delivered the latter to the public in the shape in which he found them. Accordingly, we have never seen any collection of Scottish poetry appearing, from internal evidence, so decidedly and indubitably original. It is perhaps a pity that Mr. Buchan did not remove some obvious errors and corruptions; but, in truth, though their remaining on record is an injury to the effect of the ballads, in point of composition, it is, in some degree, a proof of their authenticity. Besides, although the exertion of this editorial privilege, of selecting readings, is an advantage to the ballads themselves, we are contented rather to take the whole in their present, though imperfect, state, than that the least doubt should be thrown upon them, by amendments or alterations, which might render their authenticity doubtful. The historical poems,

we observe, are few and of no remote date. That of the "Bridge of Dee," is among the oldest, and there are others referring to the times of the Covenanters. Some, indeed, are composed on still more recent events; as the marriage of the mother of the late illustrious Byron, and a catastrophe of still later occurrence, "The Death of Leith-hall."

As we wish to interest the admirers of ancient minstrel lore in this curious collection, we shall only add, that, on occasion of a new edition, we would recommend to Mr. Buchan to leave out a number of songs which he has only inserted because they are varied, sometimes for the worse, from sets which have appeared in other publications. This restriction would make considerable room for such as, old though they be, possess to this age all the grace of novelty.

To these notices of late collections of Scottish Ballads, we ought to add some remarks on the very curious "Ancient Legendary Tales, printed chiefly from original sources, edited by the Rev. Charles Henry Hartshorne, M.A. 1829." The editor of this unostentatious work has done his duty to the public with much labor and care, and made the admirers of this species of poetry acquainted with very many ancient legendary poems, which were hitherto unpublished and very little known. It increases the value of the collection, that many of them are of a comic turn, a species of composition more rare, and, from its necessary allusion to domestic manners, more curious and interesting, than the serious class of Romances. But, on the other hand, Mr. Hartshorne's researches have rather embraced Romantic than Ballad Poetry, and cannot be accounted a collection relating chiefly to the latter class, although it contains much by which the collector in both departments must necessarily receive both pleasure and instruction.

No. VI.*

FRAGMENT OF A ROMANCE WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEEN ENTITLED,

THOMAS THE RHYMER.

CHAPTER I.

The sun was nearly set behind the distant mountains of Liddesdale, when a few of the scattered and terrified inhabitants of the village of Hersildoun, which had four days before been burned by a predatory band of English Borderers, were now busied in repairing their ruined dwellings. One high tower in the centre of the village alone exhibited no appearance of devastation. It was surrounded with court walls, and the outer gate was barred and bolted. The bushes and brambles which grew around, and had even insinuated their branches beneath the gate, plainly showed that it must have been many years since it had been opened. While the cottages around lay in smoking ruins, this pile, deserted and desolate as it seemed to be, had suffered nothing from the violence of the invaders; and the wretched beings who were endeavoring to repair their miserable huts against nightfall, seemed to neglect the preferable shelter which it might have afforded them, without the necessity of labor.

Before the day had quite gone down, a knight, richly armed, and mounted upon an ambling hackney, rode slowly into the village. His attendants were, a lady, apparently young and beautiful, who rode by his side upon a dappled palfrey; his squire, who carried his helmet and lance, and led his battle-horse, a noble steed richly caparisoned. A page and four yeomen, bearing bows and quivers, short swords and targets of

* It is not to be supposed that these fragments are given as possessing any intrinsic value of themselves; but there may be some curiosity attached to them, as to the first etchings of a plate, which are accounted interesting by those who have, in any degree, been interested in the more finished works of the artist.

a span breadth, completed his equipage, which, though small, denoted him to be a man of high rank.

He stopped and addressed several of the inhabitants whom curiosity had withdrawn from their labor to gaze at him; but at the sound of his voice, and still more on perceiving the St. George's cross in the caps of his followers, they fled, with a loud cry, "that the Southrons were returned." The knight endeavored to expostulate with the fugitives, who were chiefly aged men, women, and children; but their dread of the English name accelerated their flight, and in a few minutes, excepting the knight and his attendants, the place was deserted by all. He paced through the village to seek a shelter for the night, and despairing to find one either in the accessible tower, or the plundered huts of the peasantry, he directed his course to the left hand, where he spied a small, decent habitation, apparently the abode of a man considerably above the common rank. After much knocking, the proprietor at length showed himself at the window, and speaking in the English dialect, with great signs of apprehension, demanded their business. The warrior replied, that his quality was an English knight and baron, and that he was travelling to the court of the King of Scotland on affairs of consequence to both kingdoms.

"Pardon my hesitation, noble Sir Knight," said the old man, as he unbolted and unbarred his doors—"Pardon my hesitation, but we are here exposed to too many intrusions, to admit of our exercising unlimited and unsuspicious hospitality. What I have is yours; and God send your mission may bring back peace and the good days of our old Queen Margaret!"

"Amen, worthy Franklin," quoth the Knight—"Did you know her?"

"I came to this country in her train," said the Franklin; "and the care of some of her jointure lands which she devolved on me occasioned my settling here."

"And how do you, being an Englishman," said the Knight, "protect your life and property here, when

one of your nation cannot obtain a single night's lodging, or a draught of water, were he thirsty?"

"Marry, noble sir," answered the Franklin, "use, as they say, will make a man live in a lion's den; and as I settled here in a quiet time, and have never given cause of offence, I am respected by my neighbors, and even, as you see, by our *forayers* from England."

"I rejoice to hear it, and accept your hospitality.—Isabella, my love, our worthy host will provide you a bed. My daughter, good Franklin, is ill at ease. We will occupy your house till the Scottish King shall return from his northern expedition—meanwhile, call me Lord Lacy of Chester."

The attendants of the Baron, assisted by the Franklin, were now busied in disposing of the horses, and arranging the table for some refreshment for Lord Lacy and his fair companion. While they sat down to it, they were attended by their host and his daughter, whom custom did not permit to eat in their presence, and who afterward withdrew to an outer chamber, where the squire and page (both young men of noble birth) partook of supper, and were accommodated with beds. The yeomen, after doing honor to the rustic cheer of Queen Margaret's bailiff, withdrew to the stable, and each, beside his favorite horse, snored away the fatigues of his journey.

Early on the following morning, the travellers were roused by a thundering knocking at the door of the house, accompanied with many demands for instant admission, in the roughest tone. The squire and page of Lord Lacy, after buckling on their arms, were about to sally out to chastise these intruders, when the old host, after looking out at a private casement, contrived for reconnoitring his visitors, entreated them, with great signs of terror, to be quiet, if they did not mean that all in the house should be murdered.

He then hastened to the apartment of Lord Lacy, whom he met dressed in a long furred gown and the knightly cap called a *mortier*, irritated at the noise, and demanding to know the cause which had disturbed the repose of the household.

"Noble Sir," said the Franklin, "one of the most formidable and bloody of the Scottish Border riders is at hand—he is never seen," added he, faltering with terror, "so far from the hills, but with some bad purpose, and the power of accomplishing it—so hold yourself to your guard, for——"

A loud crash here announced that the door was broken down, and the knight just descended the stairs in time to prevent bloodshed between his attendants and the intruders. They were three in number—their chief was tall, bony, and athletic: his spare and muscular frame, as well as the hardness of his features, marked the course of his life to have been fatiguing and perilous. The effect of his appearance was aggravated by his dress, which consisted of a jack or jacket, composed of thick buff leather, on which small plates of iron of a lozenge form were stitched, in such a manner as to overlap each other, and form a coat of mail, which swayed with every motion of the wearer's body. This defensive armor covered a doublet of coarse gray cloth, and the Borderer had a few half-rusted plates of steel on his shoulders, a two-edged sword, with a dagger hanging beside it, in a buff belt —a helmet, with a few iron bars to cover the face instead of a visor, and a lance of tremendous and uncommon length, completed his appointments. The looks of the man were as wild and rude as his attire —his keen black eyes never rested one moment fixed upon a single object, but constantly traversed all around, as if they ever sought some danger to oppose, some plunder to seize, or some insult to revenge. The latter seemed to be his present object—for, regardless of the dignified presence of Lord Lacy, he uttered the most incoherent threats against the owner of the house and his guests.

"We shall see—ay, marry shall we—if an English hound is to harbor and reset the Southrons here. Thank the Abbot of Melrose, and the good Knight of Coldingnow, that have so long kept me from your skirts. But those days are gone, by St. Mary, and you shall find it!"

It is probable the enraged Borderer would not have long continued to vent his rage in empty menaces, had not the entrance of the four yeomen, with their bows bent, convinced him that the force was not at this moment on his own side.

Lord Lacy now advanced towards him. "You intrude upon my privacy, soldier; withdraw yourself and your followers—there is peace between our nations, or my servants should chastise thy presumption."

"Such peace as ye give such shall you have," answered the moss-trooper, first pointing with his lance towards the burned village, and then almost instantly levelling it against Lord Lacy. The squire drew his sword, and severed at one blow the steel head from the truncheon of the spear.

"Arthur Fitzherbert," said the Baron, "that stroke has deferred thy knighthood for one year—never must that squire wear the spurs whose unbridled impetuosity can draw unbidden his sword in the presence of his master. Go hence, and think on what I have said."

The squire left the chamber abashed.

"It were vain," continued Lord Lacy, "to expect that courtesy from a mountain churl which even my own followers can forget. Yet, before thou drawest thy brand, (for the intruder laid his hand upon the hilt of his sword,) thou wilt do well to reflect that I came with a safe-conduct from thy king, and have no time to waste in brawls with such as thou."

"From *my* king—from my king!" re-echoed the mountaineer. "I care not that rotten truncheon, (striking the shattered spear furiously on the ground) for the King of Fife and Lothian. But Habby of Cessford will be here belive; and we shall soon know if he will permit an English churl to occupy his hostelrie."

Having uttered these words, accompanied with a lowering glance from under his shaggy black eyebrows, he turned on his heel, and left the house with his two followers;—they mounted their horses, which they had tied to an outer fence, and vanished in an instant.

"Who is this discourteous ruffian?" said Lord

to the Franklin, who had stood in the most violent agitation during this whole scene.

"His name, noble lord, is Adam Kerr of the Moat, but he is commonly called by his companions, the Black Rider of Cheviot. I fear, I fear he comes hither for no good—but if the Lord of Cessford be near, he will not dare offer any unprovoked outrage."

"I have heard of that chief," said the Baron—"let me know when he approaches, and do thou, Rudolph, (to the eldest yeoman,) keep a strict watch. Adelbert, (to the page,) attend to arm me." The page bowed, and the Baron withdrew to the chamber of the Lady Isabella, to explain the cause of the disturbance.

* * * * * * *

No more of the proposed tale was ever written; but the author's purpose was that it should turn upon a fine legend of superstition, which is current in the part of the Borders where he had his residence; where in the reign of Alexander III. of Scotland, that renowned person Thomas of Hersildoune, called the Rhymer, actually flourished. This personage, the Merlin of Scotland, and to whom some of the adventures which the British bards assigned to Merlin Caledonius, or the Wild, have been transferred by tradition, was, as is well known, a magician, as well as a poet and prophet. He is alleged still to live in the land of Faery, and is expected to return at some great convulsion of society, in which he is to act a distinguished part, a tradition common to all nations, as the belief of the Mahomedans respecting their twelfth Imaum demonstrates.

Now, it chanced many years since, that there lived on the Borders a jolly, rattling horse-cowper, who was remarkable for a reckless and fearless temper, which made him much admired, and a little dreaded, among his neighbors. One moonlight night, as he rode over Bowden Moor, on the west side of the Eilden Hills, the scene of Thomas the Rhymer's prophecies, and often mentioned in his story, having a brace of horses along with him which he had not been able to dispose of, he met a man of venerable appearance, and singularly

antique dress, who to his great surprise asked the price of his horses, and began to chaffer with him on the subject. To canobie Dick, for so shall we call our Border dealer, a chap was a chap, and he would have sold a horse to the devil himself, without minding his cloven hoof, and would have probably cheated Old Nick into the bargain. The stranger paid the price they agreed on, and all that puzzled Dick in the transaction was, that the gold which he received was in unicorns, bonnet-pieces, and other ancient coins, which would have been invaluable to collectors, but were rather troublesome in modern currency. It was gold, however, and therefore Dick contrived to get better value for the coin than he perhaps gave to his customer. By the command of so good a merchant, he brought horses to the same spot more than once; the purchaser only stipulating that he should always come by night, and alone. I do not know whether it was from mere curiosity, or whether some hope of gain mixed with it, but after Dick had sold several horses in this way, he began to complain that dry bargains were unlucky, and to hint that since his chap must live in the neighborhood, he ought, in the courtesy of dealing, to treat him to half a mutchkin.

"You may see my dwelling, if you will," said the stranger; "but if you lose courage at what you see there, you will rue it all your life."

Dicken, however, laughed the warning to scorn, and having alighted to secure his horse, he followed the stranger up a narrow foot-path, which led them up the hills to the singular eminence stuck between the most southern and the centre peaks, and called from its resemblance to such an animal in its form, the Lucken Hare. At the foot of this eminence, which is almost as famous for witch meetings as the neighboring windmill of Kippilaw, Dick was somewhat startled to observe that his conductor entered the hill-side by a passage or cavern, of which he himself, though well acquainted with the spot, had never seen or heard.

"You may still return," said his guide, looking ominously back upon him; but Dick scorned to show the

white feather, and on they went. They entered a very long range of stables; in every stall stood a coal-black horse; by every horse lay a knight in coal-black armor, with a drawn sword in his hand, but all were as silent, hoof and limb, as if they had been cut out of marble. A great number of torches lent a gloomy lustre to the hall, which, like those of the Caliph Vathek, was of large dimensions. At the upper end, however, they at length arrived, where a sword and horn lay on an antique table

"He that shall sound that horn and draw that sword," said the stranger, who now intimated that he was the famous Thomas of Hersildoune, "shall, if his heart fail him not, be king over all broad Britain. So speaks the tongue that cannot lie. But all depends on courage, and much on your taking the sword or the horn first."

Dick was much disposed to take the sword, but his bold spirit was quailed by the supernatural terrors of the hall, and he thought that to unsheath the sword first might be construed into defiance, and give offence to the powers of the Mountain. He took the bugle with a trembling hand, and sounded a feeble note, but loud enough to produce a terrible answer. Thunder rolled in stunning peals through the immense hall; horses and men started to life; the steeds snorted, stamped, grinded their bits, and tossed on high their heads—the warriors sprung to their feet, clashed their armor, and brandished their swords. Dick's terror was extreme at seeing the whole army, which had been so lately silent as the grave, in uproar, and about to rush on him. He dropped the horn, and made a feeble attempt to seize the enchanted sword; but at the same moment a voice pronounced aloud the mysterious words:

"Woe to the coward, that ever he was born,
Who did not draw the sword before he blew the horn!"

At the same time a whirlwind of irresistible fury howled through the long hall, bore the unfortunate horse-jockey clear out of the mouth of the cavern, and precipitated him over a steep bank of loose stones, where the shepherds found him the next morning, with

just breath sufficient to tell his fearful tale, after concluding which he expired.

This legend, with several variations, is found in many parts of Scotland and England—the scene is sometimes laid in some favorite glen of the Highlands, sometimes in the deep coal-mines of Northumberland and Cumberland, which run so far beneath the ocean. It is also to be found in Reginald Scott's book on Witchcraft, which was written in the 16th century. It would be in vain to ask what was the original of the tradition. The choice between the horn and sword may, perhaps, include as a moral, that it is foolhardy to awaken danger before we have arms in our hands to resist it.

Although admitting of much poetical ornament, it is clear that this legend would have formed but an unhappy foundation for a prose story, and must have degenerated into a mere fairy tale. Dr. John Leyden has beautifully introduced the tradition in his Scenes of Infancy:

> Mysterious Rhymer, doom'd by Fate's decree,
> Still to revisit Eildon's fated tree;
> Where oft the swain, at dawn of Hallow-day,
> Hears thy fleet barb with wild impatience neigh
> Say who is he, with summons long and high,
> Shall bid the charmed sleep of ages fly,
> Roll the long sound through Eildon's caverns vast,
> While each dark warrior kindles at the blast:
> The horn, the falchion grasp with mighty hand,
> And peal proud Arthur's march from Fairy-land?
>
> *Scenes of Infancy*, Part I.

In the same cabinet with the preceding fragment, the following occurred among other *disjecta membra*. It seems to be an attempt at a tale of a different description from the last, but was almost instantly abandoned. The introduction points out the time of the composition to have been about the end of the 18th century.

THE LORD OF ENNERDALE.

IN A FRAGMENT OF A LETTER FROM JOHN B——, ESQ. OF THAT ILK, TO WILLIAM G——, F. R. S. E.

"FILL a bumper," said the Knight; "the ladies may spare us a little longer: fill a bumper to the Archduke Charles."

The company did do honor to the toast of their landlord.

"The success of the Archduke," said the muddy Vicar, "will tend to further our negotiation at Paris; and if"—

"Pardon the interruption, Doctor," quoth a thin emaciated figure, with somewhat of a foreign accent; "but why should you connect those events unless to hope that the bravery and victories of our allies may supersede the necessity of a degrading treaty?"

"We begin to feel, Monsieur L'Abbé," answered the Vicar with some asperity, "that a Continental war, entered into for the defence of an ally who was unwilling to defend himself, and for the restoration of a royal family, nobility, and priesthood, who tamely abandoned their own rights, is a burden too much even for the resources of this country."

"And was the war then on the part of Great Britain," rejoined the Abbé, "a gratuitous exertion of generosity? Was there no fear of the wide-wasting spirit of innovation which had gone abroad? Did not the laity tremble for their property, the clergy for their religion, and every loyal heart for the Constitution? Was it not thought necessary to destroy the building which was on fire, ere the conflagration spread around the vicinity?"

"Yet, if upon trial," said the Doctor, "the walls were found to resist our utmost efforts, I see no great prudence in persevering in our labor amid the smouldering ruins."

"What, Doctor," said the Baronet, "must I call to your recollection your own sermon on the late general

fast?—did you not encourage us to hope that the Lord of Hosts would go forth with our armies, and that our enemies who blasphemed him should be put to shame?"

"It may please a kind father to chasten even his beloved children," answered the Vicar.

"I think," said a gentleman near the foot of the table, "that the Covenanters made some apology of the same kind for the failure of their prophecies at the battle of Dunbar, when their mutinous preachers compelled the prudent Lesley to go down against the Philistines in Gilgal."

The Vicar fixed a scrutinizing and not a very complacent eye upon this intruder. He was a young man of mean stature, and rather a reserved appearance. Early and severe study had quenched in his features the gaiety peculiar to his age, and impressed upon them a premature cast of thoughtfulness. His eye had, however, retained its fire, and his gesture its animation. Had he remained silent, he would have been long unnoticed; but when he spoke, there was something in his manner which arrested attention.

"Who is this young man?" said the Vicar in a low voice to his neighbor.

"A Scotchman called Maxwell, on a visit to Sir Henry," was the answer.

"I thought so, from his accent and his manners," said the Vicar.

It may be here observed, that the Northern English retain rather more of the ancient hereditary aversion to their neighbors, than their countrymen of the South. The interference of other disputants, each of whom urged his opinion with all the vehemence of wine and politics, rendered the summons to the drawing-room agreeable to the more sober part of the company.

The company dispersed by degrees, and at length the Vicar and the young Scotchman alone remained, besides the Baronet, his lady, daughters, and myself. The clergyman had not, it would seem, forgot the observation which ranked him among the false prophets of Dunbar, for he addressed Mr. Maxwell upon the first opportunity

"Hem! I think, sir, you mentioned something about the civil wars of last century? You must be deeply skilled in them indeed, if you can draw any parallel between those and the present evil days—days which I am ready to maintain are the most gloomy that ever darkened the prospects of Britain."

"God forbid, Doctor, that I should draw a comparison between the present times and those you mention. I am too sensible of the advantages we enjoy over our ancestors. Faction and ambition have introduced division among us; but we are still free from the guilt of civil bloodshed, and from all the evils which flow from it. Our foes, sir, are not those of our own household; and while we continue united and firm, from the attacks of a foreign enemy, however artful, or however inveterate, we have, I hope, little to dread."

"Have you found any thing curious, Mr. Maxwell, among the dusty papers?" said Sir Henry, who seemed to dread a revival of political discussion.

"My investigation among them led to reflections which I have just now hinted," said Maxwell; "and I think they are pretty strongly exemplified by a story which I have been endeavoring to arrange from some of your family manuscripts."

"You are welcome to make what use of them you please," said Sir Henry; "they have been undisturbed for many a day, and I have often wished for some person as well skilled as you in these old pot-hooks, to tell me their meaning."

"Those I just mentioned," answered Maxwell, "relate to a piece of private history, savoring not a little of the marvellous, and intimately connected with your family; if it is agreeable, I can read to you the anecdotes in the modern shape into which I have been endeavoring to throw them, and you can then judge of the value of the originals."

There was something in this proposal agreeable to all parties. Sir Henry had family pride, which prepared him to take an interest in whatever related to his ancestors. The ladies had dipped deeply into the fashionable reading of the present day. Lady Ratcliff

and her fair daughters had climbed every pass, viewed every pine-shrouded ruin, heard every groan, and lifted every trap-door, in company with the noted heroine of Udolpho. They had been heard, however, to observe, that the famous incident of the Black Veil, singularly resembled the ancient apologue of the Mountain in labor, so that they were unquestionably critics, as well as admirers. Besides all this, they had valorously mounted *en croupe* behind the ghostly horseman of Prague through all his seven translators, and followed the footsteps of Moor through the forest of Bohemia. Moreover, it was even hinted, (but this was a greater mystery than all the rest,) that a certain performance called the *Monk*, in three neat volumes, had been seen, by a prying eye, in the right-hand drawer of the Indian cabinet of Lady Ratcliff's dressing-room. Thus predisposed for wonders and signs, Lady Ratcliff and her nymphs drew their chairs round a large blazing woodfire, and arranged themselves to listen to the tale. To that fire I also approached, moved thereunto partly by the inclemency of the season, and partly that my deafness, which you know, cousin, I acquired during my campaign under Prince Charles Edward, might be no obstacle to the gratification of my curiosity, which was awakened by what had any reference to the fate of such faithful followers of royalty, as you well know the house of Ratcliff have ever been. To this woodfire the Vicar likewise drew near, and reclined himself conveniently in his chair, seemingly disposed to testify his disrespect for the narration and narrator by falling asleep as soon as he conveniently could. By the side of Maxwell (by the way, I cannot learn that he is in the least related to the Nithsdale family) was placed a small table and a couple of lights, by the assistance of which he read as follows:—

"*Journal of Jan Von Eulen.*

On the 6th November, 1645, I, Jan Von Eulen, merchant in Rotterdam, embarked with my only daughter on board of the good vessel Vryheid of Amsterdam, in order to pass into the unhappy and disturbed kingdr

of England. 7th November—a brisk gale—daughter sea-sick—myself unable to complete the calculation which I have begun, of the inheritance left by Jane Lansache of Carlisle, my late dear wife's sister, the collection of which is the object of my voyage. 8th November, wind still stormy and adverse—a horrid disaster nearly happened—my dear child washed overboard as the vessel lurched to leeward. Memorandum, to reward the young sailor who saved her, out of the first moneys which I can recover from the inheritance of her aunt Lansache. 9th November, calm—P.M. Light breezes from N.N.W. I talked with the captain about the inheritance of my sister-in-law, Jane Lansache.—He says he knows the principal subject, which will not exceed £1000 in value. N.B. He is a cousin to a family of Petersons, which was the name of the husband of my sister-in-law; so there is room to hope it may be worth more than he reports. 10th November, 10 A.M. May God pardon all our sins—An English frigate, bearing the Parliament flag, has appeared in the offing, and gives chase.—11 A.M. She nears us every moment, and the captain of our vessel prepares to clear for action.—May God again have mercy upon us!"

* * * * * *

"Here," said Maxwell, "the journal with which I have opened the narration ends somewhat abruptly."

"I am glad of it," said Lady Ratcliff.

"But, Mr. Maxwell," said young Frank, Sir Henry's grandchild, "shall we not hear how the battle ended?"

I do not know, cousin, whether I have not formerly made you acquainted with the abilities of Frank Ratcliff. There is not a battle fought between the troops of the Prince and of the Government, during the years 1745–6, of which he is not able to give an account. It is true, I have taken particular pains to fix the events of this important period upon his memory by frequent repetition.

"No, my dear," said Maxwell, in answer to young Frank Ratcliff. "No, my dear, I cannot tell you the exact particulars of the engagement, but its conse-

quences appear from the following letter, dispatched by Garbonete Von Eulen, daughter of our journalist, to a relation in England, from whom she implored assistance. After some general account of the purpose of the voyage, and of the engagement, the narrative proceeds thus:—

"The noise of the cannon had hardly ceased, before the sounds of a language to me but half-known, and the confusion on board our vessel, informed me that the captors had boarded us, and taken possession of our vessel. I went on deck, where the first spectacle that met my eyes was a young man, mate of our vessel, who, though disfigured and covered with blood, was loaded with irons, and whom they were forcing over the side of the vessel into a boat. The two principal persons among our enemies appeared to be a man of a tall, thin figure, with a high-crowned hat and long neckband, and short-cropped head of hair, accompanied by a bluff, open-looking elderly man in a naval uniform. 'Yarely! yarely! pull away, my hearts,' said the latter, and the boat bearing the unlucky young man soon carried him on board the frigate. Perhaps you will blame me for mentioning this circumstance; but consider, my dear cousin, this man saved my life, and his fate, even when my own and my father's were in the balance, could not but affect me nearly.

"'In the name of him who is jealous, even to slaying,' said the first"——

* * * * * *

Cetera desunt.

No. VII.

CONCLUSION OF MR. STRUTT'S ROMANCE OF

QUEEN-HOO-HALL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

CHAPTER IV.

A HUNTING PARTY.—AN ADVENTURE.—A DELIVERANCE.

The next morning the bugles were sounded by day-break in the court of Lord Boteler's mansion, to call the inhabitants from their slumbers, to assist in a splendid chase, with which the Baron had resolved to entertain his neighbor Fitzallen, and his noble visitor St. Clere. Peter Lanaret, the falconer, was in attendance, with falcons for the knights, and teircelets for the ladies, if they should choose to vary their sport from hunting to hawking. Five stout yeomen keepers, with their attendants, called Ragged Robins, all meetly arrayed in Kendal green, with bugles and short hangers by their sides, and quarter-staffs in their hands, led the slow-hounds or brachets, by which the deer were to be put up. Ten brace of gallant grayhounds, each of which was fit to pluck down, singly, the tallest red deer, were led in leashes by as many of Lord Boteler's foresters. The pages, squires, and other attendants of feudal splendor, well attired in their best hunting-gear, upon horseback or foot, according to their rank, with their boar-spears, long-bows, and cross-bows, were in seemly waiting.

A numerous train of yeomen, called, in the language of the times, retainers, who yearly received a livery coat, and a small pension, for their attendance on such solemn occasions, appeared in cassocks of blue, bearing upon their arms the cognizance of the house of Boteler, as a badge of their adherence. They were the tallest men of their hands that the neighboring villages could supply, with every man his good

buckler on his shoulder, and a bright burnished broad-sword dangling from his leathern belt. On this occasion, they acted as rangers for beating up the thickets, and rousing the game. These attendants filled up the court of the castle, spacious as it was.

On the green without, you might have seen the motley assemblage of peasantry, convened by report of the splendid hunting, including most of our old acquaintances from Tewin, as well as the jolly partakers of good cheer at Hob Filcher's. Gregory the jester, it may well be guessed, had no great mind to exhibit himself in public, after his recent disaster; but Oswald the steward, a great formalist in whatever concerned the public exhibition of his master's household state, had positively enjoined his attendance. "What," quoth he, "shall the house of the brave Lord Boteler, on such a brave day as this, be without a fool? Certes, the good Lord St. Clere, and his fair lady sister, might think our housekeeping as niggardly as that of their churlish kinsman at Gay Bowers, who sent his father's jester to the hospital, sold the poor sot's bells for hawk-jesses, and made a nightcap of his long-eared bonnet. And, sirrah, let me see thee fool handsomely —speak squibs and crackers, instead of that dry, barren, musty gibing, which thou hast used of late; or, by the bones! the porter shall have thee to his lodge, and cob thee with thine own wooden sword, till thy skin is as motley as thy doublet."

To this stern injunction, Gregory made no reply, any more than to the courteous offer of old Albert Drawslot, the chief park-keeper, who proposed to blow vinegar in his nose, to sharpen his wit, as he had done that blessed morning to Bragger, the old hound, whose scent was failing. There was indeed little time for reply, for the bugles, after a lively flourish, were now silent, and Peretto, with his two attendant minstrels, stepping beneath the windows of the strangers' apartments, joined in the following roundelay, the deep voices of the rangers and falconers making up a chorus that caused the very battlements to ring again:

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day;
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting spear.
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray;
Springlets in the dawn are streaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming,
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay;
Tell them, youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we:
Time, stern huntsman! who can balk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk?
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

By the time this lay was finished, Lord Boteler, with his daughter and kinsman, Fitzallen of Marden, and other noble guests, had mounted their palfreys, and the hunt set forward in due order. The huntsmen, having carefully observed the traces of a large stag on the preceding evening, were able, without loss of time, to conduct the company, by the marks which they had made upon the trees, to the side of the thicket, in which, by the report of Drawslot, he had harbored all night. The horsemen spreading themselves along the side of the cover, waited until the keeper entered, leading his ban-dog, a large blood-hound tied in a leam or band, from which he takes his name.

But it befell thus. A hart of the second year, which was in the same cover with the proper object of their pursuit, chanced to be unharbored first, and broke cover very near where the Lady Emma and her brother were stationed. An inexperienced varlet, who was nearer to them, instantly unloosed two tall grayhounds, who sprang after the fugitive with all the fleetness of the north wind. Gregory, restored a little to spirits by the enlivening scene around him, followed, encouraging the hounds with a loud tayout,* for which he had the hearty curses of the huntsman, as well as of the Baron, who entered into the spirit of the chase with all the juvenile ardor of twenty. "May the foul fiend, booted and spurr'd, ride down his bawling throat, with a scythe at his girdle," quoth Albert Drawslot; "here have I been telling him, that all the marks were those of a buck of the first head, and he has hallooed the hounds upon a velvet-headed knobbler! By Saint Hubert, if I break not his pate with my cross-bow, may I never cast off hound more! But to it, my lords and masters! the noble beast is here yet, and, thank the saints, we have enough of hounds."

The cover being now thoroughly beat by the attendants, the stag was compelled to abandon it, and trust to his speed for his safety. Three grayhounds were slipped upon him, whom he threw out, after running a couple of miles, by entering an extensive furzy brake, which extended along the side of a hill. The horsemen soon came up, and casting off a sufficient number of slow-hounds, sent them with the prickers into the cover, in order to drive the game from his strength. This object being accomplished, afforded another severe chase of several miles, in a direction almost circular, during which, the poor animal tried every wile to get rid of his persecutors. He crossed and traversed all such dusty paths as were likely to retain the least scent of his footsteps; he laid himself close to the ground, drawing his feet under his belly, and clapping his nose close to the earth, lest he should be betrayed

* *Taillers-hors*—in modern phrase, Tally-ho

to the hounds by his breath and hoofs. When all was in vain, and he found the hounds coming fast in upon him, his own strength failing, his mouth embossed with foam, and the tears dropping from his eyes, he turned in despair upon his pursuers, who then stood at gaze, making a hideous clamor, and awaiting their two-footed auxiliaries. Of these, it chanced that the Lady Eleanor, taking more pleasure in the sport than Matilda, and being less a burden to her palfrey than the Lord Boteler, was the first who arrived at the spot, and taking a cross-bow from an attendant, discharged a bolt at the stag. When the infuriated animal felt himself wounded, he pushed frantically towards her from whom he had received the shaft, and Lady Eleanor might have had occasion to repent of her enterprise, had not young Fitzallen, who had kept near her during the whole day, at that instant galloped briskly in, and ere the stag could change his object of assault, dispatched him with his short hunting-sword.

Albert Drawslot, who had just come up in terror for the young lady's safety, broke out into loud encomiums upon Fitzallen's strength and gallantry. "By'r Lady," said he, taking off his cap, and wiping his sun-burnt face with his sleeve, "well struck, and in good time! —But now, boys, doff your bonnets, and sound the mort."

The sportsmen then sounded a treble mort, and set up a general whoop, which, mingled with the yelping of the dogs, made the welkin ring again. The huntsman then offered his knife to Lord Boteler, that he might take the say of the deer, but the Baron courteously insisted upon Fitzallen going through that ceremony. The Lady Matilda was now come up, with most of the attendants; and the interest of the chase being ended, it excited some surprise, that neither St. Clere nor his sister made their appearance. The Lord Boteler commanded the horns again to sound the recheat, in hopes to call in the stragglers, and said to Fitzallen, "Methinks St. Clere, so distinguished for service in war, should have been more forward in the chase."

"I trow," said Peter Lanaret, "I know the reason

of the noble lord's absence: for when that mooncalf, Gregory, hallooed the dogs upon the knobbler, and galloped like a green hilding, as he is, after them, I saw the Lady Emma's palfrey follow apace after that varlet, who should be trashed for overrunning, and I think her noble brother has followed her, lest she should come to harm—But here, by the rood, is Gregory to answer for himself."

At this moment Gregory entered the circle which had been formed round the deer, out of breath, and his face covered with blood. He kept for some time uttering inarticulate cries of "Harrow!" and "Well-away!" and other exclamations of distress and terror, pointing all the while to a thicket at some distance from the spot where the deer had been killed.

"By my honor," said the Baron, "I would gladly know who has dared to array the poor knave thus; and I trust he should dearly abye his outrecuidance, were he the best, save one, in England."

Gregory, who had now found more breath, cried, "Help, an ye be men! Save Lady Emma and her brother, whom they are murdering in Brockenhurst thicket."

This put all in motion. Lord Boteler hastily commanded a small party of his men to abide for the defence of the ladies, while he himself, Fitzallen, and the rest, made what speed they could towards the thicket, guided by Gregory, who for that purpose was mounted behind Fabian. Pushing through a narrow path, the first object they encountered was a man of small stature lying on the ground, mastered and almost strangled by two dogs, which were instantly recognized to be those that had accompanied Gregory. A little farther was an open space where lay three bodies of dead or wounded men; besides these was Lady Emma, apparently lifeless, her brother and a young forester bending over and endeavoring to recover her. By employing the usual remedies, this was soon accomplished; while Lord Boteler, astonished at such a scene, anxiously inquired of St. Clere the meaning of what he saw, and whether more danger was to be expect

"For the present, I trust not," said the young warrior, who they now observed was slightly wounded; "but I pray you, of your nobleness, let the woods here be searched; for we were assaulted by four of these base assassins, and I see three only on the sward."

The attendants now brought forward the person whom they had rescued from the dogs, and Henry, with disgust, shame, and astonishment, recognized his kinsman, Gaston St. Clere. This discovery he communicated in a whisper to Lord Boteler, who commanded the prisoner to be conveyed to Queen-hoo-Hall, and closely guarded; meanwhile he anxiously inquired of young St. Clere about his wound.

"A scratch, a trifle!" cried Henry; "I am in less haste to bind it than to introduce to you one, without whose aid that of the leech would have come too late. —Where is he? where is my brave deliverer?"

"Here, most noble Lord," said Gregory, sliding from his palfrey, and stepping forward, "ready to receive the guerdon which your bounty would heap on him."

"Truly, friend Gregory," answered the young warrior, "thou shalt not be forgotten; for thou didst run speedily, and roar manfully for aid, without which, I think verily, we had not received it.—But the brave forester, who came to my rescue when these three ruffians had nigh overpowered me, where is he?"

Every one looked around, but though all had seen him on entering the thicket, he was not now to be found. They could only conjecture that he had retired during the confusion occasioned by the detention of Gaston.

"Seek not for him," said the Lady Emma, who had now in some degree recovered her composure; "he will not be found of mortal, unless at his own season."

The Baron, convinced, from this answer, that her terror had, for the time, somewhat disturbed her reason, forbore to question her; and Matilda and Eleanor, to whom a message had been dispatched with the result of this strange adventure, arriving, they took the Lady Emma between them, and all in a body returned to the castle.

The distance was, however, considerable, and before reaching it, they had another alarm. The prickers, who rode foremost in the troop, halted, and announced to the Lord Boteler, that they perceived advancing towards them a body of armed men. The followers of the Baron were numerous, but they were arrayed for the chase, not for battle; and it was with great pleasure that he discerned, on the pennon of the advancing body of men-at-arms, instead of the cognizance of Gaston, as he had some reason to expect, the friendly bearings of Fitzosborne of Diggswell, the same young Lord who was present at the May-games with Fitzallen of Marden. The knight himself advanced, sheathed in armor, and, without raising his visor, informed Lord Boteler, that having heard of a base attempt made upon a part of his train by ruffianly assassins, he had mounted and armed a small party of his retainers, to escort them to Queen-hoo-Hall. Having received and accepted an invitation to attend them thither, they prosecuted their journey in confidence and security, and arrived safe at home without any further accident.

CHAPTER V.

INVESTIGATION OF THE ADVENTURE OF THE HUNTING—A DISCOVERY—GREGORY'S MANHOOD—FATE OF GASTON ST. CLERE—CONCLUSION.

So soon as they arrived at the princely mansion of Boteler, the Lady Emma craved permission to retire to her chamber, that she might compose her spirits after the terror she had undergone. Henry St. Clere, in a few words, proceeded to explain the adventure to the curious audience. "I had no sooner seen my sister's palfrey, in spite of her endeavors to the contrary, entering with spirit into the chase set on foot by the worshipful Gregory, than I rode after to give her assistance. So long was the chase, that when the grayhounds pulled down the knobbler, we were out of hearing of your bugles; and having rewarded and coupled the dogs, I gave them to be led by the jester, and we wan-

dered in quest of our company, whom it would seem the sport had led in a different direction. At length passing through the thicket where you found us, I was surprised by a cross-bow bolt whizzing past mine head. I drew my sword and rushed into the thicket, but was instantly assailed by two ruffians, while the other two made towards my sister and Gregory. The poor knave fled, crying for help, pursued by my false kinsman, now your prisoner; and the designs of the other on my poor Emma (murderous no doubt) were prevented by the sudden apparition of a brave woodsman, who, after a short encounter, stretched the miscreant at his feet, and came to my assistance. I was already slightly wounded, and nearly overlaid with odds. The combat lasted some time, for the caitiffs were both well armed, strong, and desperate; at length, however, we had each mastered our antagonist, when your retinue, my Lord Boteler, arrived to my relief. So ends my story; but, by my knighthood, I would give an earl's ransom for an opportunity of thanking the gallant forester by whose aid I live to tell it."

"Fear not," said Lord Boteler, "he shall be found, if this or the four adjacent counties hold him.—And now Lord Fitzosborne will be pleased to doff the armor he has so kindly assumed for our sakes, and we will all bowne ourselves for the banquet."

When the hour of dinner approached, the Lady Matilda and her cousin visited the chamber of the fair Darcy. They found her in a composed but melancholy posture. She turned the discourse upon the misfortunes of her life, and hinted, that having recovered her brother, and seeing him look forward to the society of one who would amply repay to him the loss of hers, she had thoughts of dedicating her remaining life to Heaven, by whose providential interference it had been so often preserved.

Matilda colored deeply at something in this speech, and her cousin inveighed loudly against Emma's resolution. "Ah, my dear Lady Eleanor," replied she, "I have to-day witnessed what I cannot but judge a supernatural visitation, and to what end can it call me

but to give myself to the altar? That peasant who guided me to Baddow through the Park of Danbury, the same who appeared before me at different times, and in different forms, during that eventful journey,—that youth, whose features are imprinted on my memory, is the very individual forester who this day rescued us in the forest. I cannot be mistaken; and, connecting these marvellous appearances with the spectre which I saw while at Gay Bowers, I cannot resist the conviction that Heaven has permitted my guardian angel to assume mortal shape for my relief and protection."

The fair cousins, after exchanging looks which implied a fear that her mind was wandering, answered her in soothing terms, and finally prevailed upon her to accompany them to the banqueting hall. Here the first person they encountered was the Baron Fitzosborne of Diggswell, now divested of his armor: at the sight of whom the Lady Emma changed color, and exclaiming, "It is the same!" sunk senseless into the arms of Matilda.

"She is bewildered by the terrors of the day," said Eleanor; "and we have done ill in obliging her to descend."

"And I," said Fitzosborne, "have done madly in presenting before her one, whose presence must recall moments the most alarming in her life."

While the ladies supported Emma from the hall, Lord Boteler and St. Clere requested an explanation from Fitzosborne of the words he had used.

"Trust me, gentle Lords," said the Baron of Diggswell, "ye shall have what ye demand, when I learn that Lady Emma Darcy has not suffered from my imprudence."

At this moment Lady Matilda returning, said, that her fair friend, on her recovery, had calmly and deliberately insisted that she had seen Fitzosborne before, in the most dangerous crisis of her life.

"I dread," said she, "her disordered mind connects all that her eye beholds with the terrible passages that she has witnessed.'

"Nay," said Fitzosborne, "if noble St. Clere can pardon the unauthorized interest which, with the purest and most honorable intentions, I have taken in his sister's fate, it is easy for me to explain this mysterious impression."

He proceeded to say, that, happening to be in the hostelry called the Griffin, near Baddow, while upon a journey in that country, he had met with the old nurse of the Lady Emma Darcy, who, being just expelled from Gay Bowers, was in the height of her grief and indignation, and made loud and public proclamation of Lady Emma's wrongs. From the description she gave of the beauty of her foster-child, as well as from the spirit of chivalry, Fitzosborne became interested in her fate. This interest was deeply enhanced when, by a bribe to old Gaunt the Reve, he procured a view of the Lady Emma, as she walked near the castle of Gay Bowers. The aged churl refused to give him access to the castle; yet dropped some hints, as if he thought the lady in danger, and wished she were well out of it. His master, he said, had heard she had a brother in life, and since that deprived him of all chance of gaining her domains by purchase, he——in short, Gaunt wished they were safely separated. "If any injury," quoth he, "should happen to the damsel here, it were ill for us all. I tried, by an innocent stratagem, to frighten her from the castle, by introducing a figure through a trap-door, and warning her, as if by a voice from the dead, to retreat from thence; but the giglet is wilful, and is running upon her fate."

Finding Gaunt, although covetous and communicative, too faithful a servant to his wicked master to take any active steps against his commands, Fitzosborne applied himself to old Ursely, whom he found more tractable. Through her he learned the dreadful plot Gaston had laid to rid himself of his kinswoman, and resolved to effect her deliverance. But aware of the delicacy of Emma's situation, he charged Ursely to conceal from her the interest he took in her distress, resolving to watch over her in disguise, until he saw her in a place of safety. Hence the appearance he

made before her in various dresses during her journey, in the course of which he was never far distant; and he had always four stout yeomen within hearing of his bugle, had assistance been necessary. When she was placed in safety at the lodge, it was Fitzosborne's intention to have prevailed upon his sisters to visit, and take her under their protection; but he found them absent from Diggswell, having gone to attend an aged relation, who lay dangerously ill in a distant county. They did not return until the day before the May-games; and the other events followed too rapidly to permit Fitzosborne to lay any plan for introducing them to Lady Emma Darcy. On the day of the chase, he resolved to preserve his romantic disguise, and attend the Lady Emma as a forester, partly to have the pleasure of being near her, and partly to judge whether, according to an idle report in the country, she favored his friend and comrade Fitzallen of Marden. This last motive, it may easily be believed, he did not declare to the company. After the skirmish with the ruffians, he waited till the Baron and the hunters arrived, and then, still doubting the farther designs of Gaston, hastened to his castle, to arm the band which had escorted them to Queen-hoo-Hall.

Fitzosborne's story being finished, he received the thanks of all the company, particularly of St. Clere, who felt deeply the respectful delicacy with which he had conducted himself towards his sister. The lady was carefully informed of her obligations to him; and it is left to the well-judging reader, whether even the raillery of Lady Eleanor made her regret, that Heaven had only employed natural means for her security, and that the guardian angel was converted into a handsome, gallant, and enamored knight.

The joy of the company in the hall extended itself to the buttery, where Gregory the jester narrated such feats of arms done by himself in the fray of the morning, as might have shamed Bevis and Guy of Warwick. He was, according to his narrative, singled out for destruction by the gigantic Baron himself, while he

abandoned to meaner hands the destruction of St. Clere and Fitzosborne.

"But certes," said he, "the foul paynim met his match; for, ever as he foined at me with his brand, I parried his blows with my bauble, and closing with him upon the third veny, threw him to the ground, and made him cry recreant to an unarmed man."

"Tush, man," said Drawslot, "thou forgettest thy best auxiliaries, the good grayhounds, Help and Holdfast! I warrant thee, that when the humpbacked Baron caught thee by the cowl, which he hath almost torn off, thou hadst been in a fair plight had they not remembered an old friend, and come in to the rescue. Why, man, I found them fastened on him myself; and there was odd staving and stickling to make them 'ware haunch!' Their mouths were full of the flex, for I pulled a piece of the garment from their jaws. I warrant thee, that when they brought him to the ground, thou fledst like a frighted picket."

"And as for Gregory's gigantic paynim," said Fabian, "why, he lies yonder in the guard-room, the very size, shape, and color of a spider in a yew-hedge."

"It is false!" said Gregory; "Colbrand the Dane was a dwarf to him."

"It is true," returned Fabian, "as that the Tasker is to be married, on Tuesday, to pretty Margery. Gregory, thy sheet hath brought them between a pair of blankets."

"I care no more for such a gillflirt," said the Jester, "than I do for thy leasings. Marry, thou hop-o'-my-thumb, happy wouldst thou be could thy head reach the captive Baron's girdle."

"By the mass," said Peter Lanaret, "I will have one peep at this burly gallant;" and, leaving the buttery, he went to the guard-room where Gaston St. Clere was confined. A man-at-arms, who kept sentinel on the strong studded door of the apartment, said, he believed he slept; for that, after raging, stamping, and uttering the most horrid imprecations, he had been of late perfectly still. The Falconer gently drew back a

sliding board, of a foot square, towards the top of the door, which covered a hole of the same size, strongly latticed, through which the warder, without opening the door, could look in upon his prisoner. From this aperture he beheld the wretched Gaston suspended by the neck, by his own girdle, to an iron ring in the side of his prison. He had clambered to it by means of the table on which his food had been placed; and, in the agonies of shame, and disappointed malice, had adopted this mode of ridding himself of a wretched life. He was found yet warm, but totally lifeless. A proper account of the manner of his death was drawn up and certified. He was buried that evening, in the chapel of the castle, out of respect to his high birth; and the chaplain of Fitzallen of Marden, who said the service upon the occasion, preached, the next Sunday, an excellent sermon upon the text, Radix malorum est cupiditas, which we have here transcribed.——

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[Here the manuscript, from which we have painfully transcribed, and frequently, as it were, translated this tale, for the reader's edification, is so indistinct and defaced, that, excepting certain howbeits, nathlesses, lo ye's ! &c. we can pick out little that is intelligible, saving that avarice is defined "a likorishness of heart after earthly things." A little farther, there seems to have been a gay account of Margery's wedding with Ralph the Tasker; the running at the quintain, and other rural games practised on the occasion. There are also fragments of a mock sermon preached by Gregory upon that occasion, as for example:

"My dear cursed caitiffs, there was once a king, and he wedded a young old queen, and she had a child; and this child was sent to Solomon the Sage, praying he would give it the same blessing which he got from the witch of Endor when she bit him by the heel. Hereof speaks the worthy Radigundus Potator; why should not mass be said for all the roasted shoe souls served up in the king's dish on Saturday; for true it is, that St. Peter asked father Adam, as they journeyed

to Camelot, a high, great, and doubtful question, 'Adam, Adam, why eatedst thou the apple without paring?'"*

With much goodly gibberish to the same effect; which display of Gregory's ready wit not only threw the whole company into convulsions of laughter, but made such an impression on Rose, the Potter's daughter, that it was thought it would be the Jester's own fault if Jack was long without his Jill. Much pithy matter, concerning the bringing the bride to bed—the loosing the bridegroom's points—the scramble which ensued for them—and the casting of the stocking, is also omitted from its obscurity.

The following song, which has been since borrowed by the worshipful author of the famous "History of Fryar Bacon," has been with difficulty deciphered. It seems to have been sung on occasion of carrying home the bride.

BRIDAL SONG.

To the tune of "I have been a fiddler," &c.

And did you not hear of a mirth befell
The morrow after a wedding-day,
And carrying a bride at home to dwell?
And away to Tewin, away, away!

The quintain was set, and the garlands were made,
'Tis pity old customs should ever decay;

* This tirade of gibberish is literally taken or selected from a mock discourse pronounced by a professed jester, which occurs in an ancient manuscript in the Advocates' Library, the same from which the late ingenious Mr. Weber published the curious comic romance of the Hunting of the Hare. It was introduced in compliance with Mr. Strutt's plan of rendering his tale an illustration of ancient manners. A similar burlesque sermon is pronounced by the Fool in Sir Lindesay's satire of the Three Estates. The nonsense and vulgar burlesque of that composition, illustrate the ground of Sir Andrew Aguecheek's eulogy on the exploits of the jester in Twelfth Night, who, reserving his sharper jests for Sir Toby, had doubtless enough of the jargon of his calling to captivate the imbecility of his brother knight, who is made to exclaim—"In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Pigrogremitus, and of the vapors passing the equinoctials of Quenbus; 't was very good, i' faith!" It is entertaining to find commentators seeking to discover some meaning in the professional jargon of such a passage as this.

And wo be to him that was horsed on a jade,
For he carried no credit away, away.

We met a consort of fiddle-de-dees;
We set them a cockhorse, and made them play
The winning of Bullen, and Upsey frees,
And away to Tewin, away, away!

There was ne'er a lad in all the parish
That would go to the plow that day;
But on his fore-horse his wench he carries,
And away to Tewin, away, away!

The butler was quick, and the ale he did tap,
The maidens did make the chamber full gay;
The servants did give me a fuddling cup,
And I did carry it away, away.

The smith of the town his liquor so took,
That he was persuaded that the ground look'd blue;
And I dare boldly be sworn on a book,
Such smiths as he, there's but a few.

A posset was made, and the women did sip,
And simpering said they could eat no more;
Full many a maiden was laid on the lip,—
I'll say no more, but give o'er (give o'er.)

But what our fair readers will chiefly regret, is the loss of three declarations of love; the first by St. Clere to Matilda; which, with the lady's answer, occupies fifteen closely written pages of manuscript. That of Fitzosborne to Emma is not much shorter; but the amours of Fitzallen and Eleanor, being of a less romantic cast, are closed in three pages only. The three noble couples were married in Queen-hoo-Hall upon the same day, being the twentieth Sunday after Easter. There is a prolix account of the marriage-feast, of which we can pick out the names of a few dishes, such as peterel, crane, sturgeon, swan, &c. &c. with a profusion of wild fowl and venison. We also see, that a suitable song was produced by Peretto on the occasion; and that the bishop, who blessed the bridal beds which received the happy couples, was no niggard of his holy water. bestowing half a gallon upon each of the couches. We regret we cannot give

these curiosities to the reader in detail, but we hope to expose the manuscript to abler antiquaries, so soon as it shall be framed and glazed by the ingenious artist who rendered that service to Mr. Ireland's Shakspeare's MSS. And so, (being unable to lay aside the style to which our pen is habituated,) gentle reader, we bid thee heartily farewell.

No. VIII.

The Author of Waverley has been charged with painting the young adventurer in colors more amiable than his character deserved. But having known many individuals who were near his person, he has been described according to the light in which those eye-witnesses saw his temper and qualifications. Something must be allowed, no doubt, to the natural exaggerations of those who remembered him as the bold and adventurous Prince, in whose cause they had braved death and ruin; but is their evidence to give place entirely to that of a single malcontent?

I have already noticed the imputations thrown by the Chevalier Johnstone on the Prince's courage. But some part at least of that gentleman's tale is purely romantic. It would not, for instance, be supposed, that at the time he is favoring us with the highly-wrought account of his amour with the adorable Peggie, the Chevalier Johnstone was a married man, whose grandchild is now alive, or that the whole circumstantial story concerning the outrageous vengeance taken by Gordon of Abbachie on a Presbyterian clergyman, is entirely apocryphal. At the same time it may be admitted, that the Prince, like others of his family, did not esteem the services done him by his adherents so highly as he ought. Educated in high ideas of his hereditary right, he has been supposed to have held every exertion and sacrifice made in his cause as too much the duty of the person making it, to merit extravagant gratitude on his part. Dr. King's evidence (which his leaving the Jacobite interest renders somewhat doubtful) goes to strengthen this opinion.

The ingenious editor of Johnstone's Memoirs has quoted a story said to be told by Helvetius, stating that Prince Charles Edward, far from voluntarily embarking on his daring expedition, was literally bound hand and foot, and to which he seems disposed to yield credit. Now, it being a fact as well known as any in

his history, and, so far as I know, entirely undisputed, that the Prince's personal entreaties and urgency positively forced Boisdale and Lochiel into insurrection, when they were earnestly desirous that he would put off his attempt until he could obtain a sufficient force from France, it will be very difficult to reconcile his alleged reluctance to undertake the expedition, with his desperately insisting on carrying the rising into effect, against the advice and entreaty of his most powerful and most sage partisans. Surely a man who had been carried bound on board the vessel which brought him to so desperate an enterprise, would have taken the opportunity afforded by the reluctance of his partisans, to return to France in safety.

It is averred in Johnstone's Memoirs, that Charles Edward left the field of Culloden without doing the utmost to dispute the victory; and, to give the evidence on both sides, there is in existence the more trust-worthy testimony of Lord Elcho, who states, that he himself earnestly exhorted the Prince to charge at the head of the left wing, which was entire, and retrieve the day or die with honor. And on his counsel being declined, Lord Elcho took leave of him with a bitter execration, swearing he would never look on his face again, and kept his word.

On the other hand, it seems to have been the opinion of almost all the other officers, that the day was irretrievably lost, one wing of the Highlanders being entirely routed, the rest of the army out-numbered, outflanked, and in a condition totally hopeless. In this situation of things, the Irish officers who surrounded Charles's person interfered to force him off the field. A cornet, who was close to the Prince, left a strong attestation, that he had seen Sir Thomas Sheridan seize the bridle of his horse, and turn him round. There is some discrepance of evidence; but the opinion of Lord Elcho, a man of fiery temper, and desperate at the ruin which he beheld impending, cannot fairly be taken, in prejudice of a character for courage which is intimated by the nature of the enterprise itself, by the Prince's eagerness to fight on all occasions, by his determina-

tion to advance from Derby to London, and by the presence of mind which he manifested during the romantic perils of his escape. The author is far from claiming for this unfortunate person the praise due to splendid talents; but he continues to be of opinion, that at the period of his enterprise, he had a mind capable of facing danger and aspiring to fame.

That Charles Edward had the advantages of a graceful presence, courtesy, and an address and manner becoming his station, the author never heard disputed by any who approached his person, nor does he conceive that these qualities are overcharged in the present attempt to sketch his portrait. The following extracts, corroborative of the general opinion respecting the Prince's amiable disposition, are taken from a manuscript account of his romantic expedition, by James Maxwell of Kirkconnell, of which I possess a copy, by the friendship of J. Menzies, Esq. of Pitfoddells. The author, though partial to the prince, whom he faithfully followed, seems to have been a fair and candid man, and well acquainted with the intrigues among the Adventurer's council:—

"Every body was mightily taken with the Prince's figure and personal behavior. There was but one voice about them. Those whom interest or prejudice made a runaway to his cause, could not help acknowledging that they wished him well in all other respects, and could hardly blame him for his present undertaking. Sundry things had concurred to raise his character to the highest pitch, besides the greatness of the enterprise, and the conduct that had hitherto appeared in the execution of it. There were several instances of good-nature and humanity that had made a great impression on people's minds. I shall confine myself to two or three. Immediately after the battle, as the Prince was riding along the ground that Cope's army had occupied a few minutes before, one of the officers came up to congratulate him, and said, pointing to the killed, 'Sir, there are your enemies at your feet.' The Prince, far from exulting, expressed a great deal of compassion for his father's deluded subjects, whom he

declared he was heartily sorry to see in that posture. Next day, while the Prince was at Pinkie-house, a citizen of Edinburgh came to make some representation to Secretary Murray about the tents that city was ordered to furnish against a certain day. Murray happened to be out of the way, which the Prince hearing of, called to have the gentleman brought to him, saying, he would rather dispatch the business, whatever it was, himself, than have the gentleman wait, which he did, by granting every thing that was asked. So much affability in a young prince, flushed with victory, drew encomiums even from his enemies. But what gave the people the highest idea of him, was the negative he gave to a thing that very nearly concerned his interest, and upon which the success of his enterprise perhaps depended. It was proposed to send one of the prisoners to London, to demand of that court a cartel for the exchange of prisoners taken, and to be taken, during this war, and to intimate that a refusal would be looked upon as a resolution on their part to give no quarter. It was visible a cartel would be of great advantage to the Prince's affairs; his friends would be more ready to declare for him, if they had nothing to fear but the chance of war in the field; and if the court of London refused to settle a cartel, the Prince was authorized to treat his prisoners in the same manner the Elector of Hanover was determined to treat such of the Prince's friends as might fall into his hands: it was urged that a few examples would compel the court of London to comply. It was to be presumed that the officers of the English army would make a point of it. They had never engaged in the service, but upon such terms as are in use among all civilized nations, and it could be no stain upon their honor to lay down their commissions if these terms were not observed, and that owing to the obstinacy of their own Prince. Though this scheme was plausible, and represented as very important, the Prince could never be brought into it; it was below him, he said, to make empty threats, and he would never put such as those into execution; he would never in cold blood take away lives which he

had saved in heat of action, at the peril of his own. These were not the only proofs of good-nature the Prince gave about this time. Every day produced something new of this kind. These things softened the rigor of a military government, which was only imputed to the necessity of his affairs, and which he endeavored to make as gentle and easy as possible."

It has been said, that the Prince sometimes exacted more state and ceremonial than seemed to suit his condition; but, on the other hand, some strictness of etiquette was altogether indispensable where he must otherwise have been exposed to general intrusion. He could also endure, with a good grace, the retorts which his affectation of ceremony sometimes exposed him to. It is said, for example, that Grant of Glenmoriston having made a hasty march to join Charles, at the head of his clan, rushed into the Prince's presence at Holyrood, with unceremonious haste, without having attended to the duties of the toilet. The prince received him kindly, but not without a hint that a previous interview with the barber might not have been wholly unnecessary. "It is not beardless boys," answered the displeased Chief, "who are to do your Royal Highness's turn." The Chevalier took the rebuke in good part.

On the whole, if Prince Charles had concluded his life soon after his miraculous escape, his character in history must have stood very high. As it was, his station is among those, a certain brilliant portion of whose life forms a remarkable contrast to all which precedes, and all which follows it.

No. IX.

While these sheets were passing through the press, I received the following communication from Mr. Train, whose undeviating kindness had, during the intervals of laborious duty, collected its materials from an indubitable source.

"In the course of my periodical visits to the Glenkens, I have become intimately acquainted with Robert Paterson, a son of Old Mortality, who lives in the little village of Balmaclellan; and although he is now in the 70th year of his age, preserves all the vivacity of youth—has a most retentive memory, and a mind stored with information far above what could be expected from a person in his station of life. To him I am indebted for the following particulars relative to his father, and his descendants down to the present time.

"Robert Paterson, *alias* Old Mortality, was the son of Walter Paterson and Margaret Scott, who occupied the farm of Haggisha, in the parish of Hawick, during nearly the first half of the eighteenth century. Here Robert was born, in the memorable year 1715.

"Being the youngest son of a numerous family, he, at an early age, went to serve with an elder brother, named Francis, who rented, from Sir John Jardine of Applegarth, a small tract in Comcockle Moor, near Lochmaben. During his residence there, he became acquainted with Elizabeth Gray, daughter of Robert Gray, gardener to Sir John Jardine, whom he afterwards married. His wife had been for a considerable time, a cook-maid to Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, who procured for her husband, from the Duke of Queensberry, an advantageous lease of the freestone quarry of Gatelowbrigg, in the parish of Morton. Here he built a house, and had as much land as kept a horse and cow. My informant cannot say, with certainty, the year in which his father took up his residence at Gatelowbrigg, but he is sure it must have been only a short time prior to the year 1746, as, during the memo-

rable frost in 1740, he says his mother still resided in the service of Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick. When the Highlanders were returning from England on their route to Glasgow, in the year 1745–6, they plundered Mr. Paterson's house at Gatelowbrigg, and carried him a prisoner as far as Glenbuck, merely because he said to one of the straggling army, that their retreat might have been easily foreseen, as the strong arm of the Lord was evidently raised, not only against the bloody and wicked house of Stewart, but against all who attempted to support the abominable heresies of the Church of Rome. From this circumstance it appears that Old Mortality had, even at that early period of his life, imbibed the religious enthusiasm by which he afterwards became so much distinguished.

"The religious sect called Hill-men, or Cameronians, was at that time much noted for austerity and devotion, in imitation of Cameron, their founder, of whose tenets Old Mortality became a most strenuous supporter. He made frequent journeys into Galloway to attend their conventicles, and occasionally carried with him gravestones from his quarry of Gatelowbrigg, to keep in remembrance the righteous whose dust had been gathered to their fathers. Old Mortality was not one of those religious devotees, who, although one eye is seemingly turned towards heaven, keep the other stedfastly fixed on some sublunary object. As his enthusiasm increased, his journeys into Galloway became more frequent; and he gradually neglected even the common prudential duty of providing for his offspring. From about the year 1758, he neglected wholly to return from Galloway to his wife and five children at Gatelowbrigg, which induced her to send her eldest son Walter, then only twelve years of age, to Galloway, in search of his father. After traversing nearly the whole of that extensive district, from the Nick of Benncorie to the Fell of Barullion, he found him at last working on the Cameronian monuments, in the old kirkyard of Kirkchrist, on the west side of the Dee, opposite the town of Kirkcudbright. The little wanderer used all the influence in his power to induce his father to re-

turn to his family; but in vain. Mrs. Paterson sent even some of her female children into Galloway in search of their father, for the same purpose of persuading him to return home; but without any success. At last, in the summer of 1768, she removed to the little upland village of Balmaclellan, in the Glenkens of Galloway, where, upon the small pittance derived from keeping a little school, she supported her numerous family in a respectable manner.

"There is a small monumental stone in the farm of the Caldon, near the House of the Hill, in Wigtonshire, which is highly venerated as being the first erected, by Old Mortality, to the memory of several persons who fell at that place in defence of their religious tenets in the civil war, in the reign of Charles Second.*

"From the Caldon, the labors of Old Mortality, in the course of time, spread over nearly all the Lowlands of Scotland. There are few churchyards in Ayrshire, Galloway, or Dumfries-shire, where the work of his chisel is not yet to be seen. It is easily distinguished from the work of any other artist by the primitive rudeness of the emblems of death, and of the inscriptions which adorn the ill-formed blocks of his erection. This task of repairing and erecting gravestones, practised without fee or reward, was the only ostensible employment of this singular person for upwards of forty years. The door of every Cameronian's house was indeed open to him at all times when he chose to enter, and he was gladly received as an inmate of the family; but he did not invariably accept of these civilities, as may be seen by the following account of his frugal expenses, found, amongst other little papers, (some of which I have likewise in my possession,) in his pocket-book after his death.

Gatehouse of Fleet, 4th February, 1796.

ROBERT PATERSON *debtor to* MARGARET CHRYSTALE.

To drye Lodginge for seven weeks, - - - - -	£.0	4	1
To Four Auchlet of Ait Meal, - - - - - - - - -	0	3	4

* "The house was stormed by a Captain Orchard or Urquhart, who was shot in the attack."

To 6 Lippies of Potatoes,	0	1	3
To Lent Money at the time of Mr. Reid's Sacrament,	0	6	0
To 3 Chappins of Yell with Sandy the Keelman,*	0	0	0
	£.0	15	5
Received in part,	0	10	0
Unpaid	£.0	5	5

"This statement shows the religious wanderer to have been very poor in his old age; but he was so more by choice than through necessity, as at the period here alluded to, his children were all comfortably situated, and were most anxious to keep their father at home, but no entreaty could induce him to alter his erratic way of life. He travelled from one churchyard to another, mounted on his old white pony, till the last day of his existence, and died, as you have described, at Bankhill, near Lockerby, on the 14th February, 1801, in the 86th year of his age. As soon as his body was found, intimation was sent to his sons at Balmaclellan; but from the great depth of the snow at that time, the letter communicating the particulars of his death was so long detained by the way, that the remains of the pilgrim were interred before any of his relations could arrive at Bankhill.

"The following is an exact copy of the account of his funeral expenses,—the original of which I have in my possession:—

"Memorandum of the Funral Charges of Robert Paterson, who dyed at Bankhill on the 14th day of February, 1801.

To a Coffin,	£.0	12	0
To Munting for do.	0	2	8
To a Shirt for him,	0	5	6
To a pair of Cotten Stockings,	0	2	0
To Bread at the Founral,	0	2	6
To Chise at ditto,	0	3	0
To 1 pint Rume,	0	4	6
To 1 pint Whiskie,	0	4	0
To a man going to Annan,	0	2	0

*"A well-known humorist, still alive, popularly called by the name of Old Keelybags, who deals in the keel or chalk with which farmers mark their flocks."

To the grave diger,	0	1	0
To Linnen for a sheet to him,	0	2	8
	£.2	1	10
Taken off him when dead,	1	7	6
	£.0	14	4

"The above account is authenticated by the son of the deceased.

"My friend was prevented by indisposition from even going to Bankhill to attend the funeral of his father, which I regret very much, as he is not aware in what churchyard he was interred.

"For the purpose of erecting a small monument to his memory, I have made every possible inquiry, wherever I thought there was the least chance of finding out where Old Mortality was laid; but I have done so in vain, as his death is not registered in the session-book of any of the neighboring parishes. I am sorry to think, that in all probability, this singular person, who spent so many years of his lengthened existence in striving with his chisel and mallet to perpetuate the memory of many less deserving than himself, must remain even without a single stone to mark out the resting place of his mortal remains.

"Old Mortality had three sons, Robert, Walter and John; the former, as has been already mentioned, lives in the village of Balmaclellan, in comfortable circumstances, and is much respected by his neighbors. Walter died several years ago, leaving behind him a family now respectably situated in this point. John went to America in the year 1776, and, after various turns of fortune, settled at Baltimore."

Old Nol himself is said to have loved an innocent jest. (See Captain Hodgson's Memoirs.) Old Mortality somewhat resembled the Protector in this turn to festivity. Like Master Silence, he had been merry twice and once in his time; but even his jests were of a melancholy and sepulchral nature, and sometimes attended with inconvenience to himself as will appear from the following anecdote:—

The old man was at one time following his wonted

occupation of repairing the tombs of the martyrs, in the churchyard of Girthon, and the sexton of the parish was plying his kindred task at no small distance. Some roguish urchins were sporting near them, and by their noisy gambols disturbing the old men in their serious occupation. The most petulant of the juvenile party were two or three boys, grandchildren of a person well known by the name of Cooper Climent. This artist enjoyed almost a monopoly in Girthon and the neighboring parishes, for making and selling ladles, caups, bickers, bowls, spoons, couges, and trenchers, formed of wood, for the use of the country people. It must be noticed, that notwithstanding the excellence of the Cooper's vessels, they were apt, when new, to impart a reddish tinge to whatever liquor was put into them, a circumstance not uncommon in like cases.

The grandchildren of this dealer in wooden work took it into their head to ask the sexton, what use he could possibly make of the numerous fragments of old coffins which were thrown up in opening new graves. "Do you not know" said old Mortality, "that he sells them to your grandfather, who makes them into spoons, trenchers, bickers, bowies, and so forth?" At this assertion, the youthful group broke up in great confusion and disgust, on reflecting how many meals they had eaten out of dishes which, by old Mortality's account, were only fit to be used at a banquet of witches or of ghoules. They carried the tidings home, when many a dinner was spoiled by the lothing which the intelligence imparted; for the account of the materials was supposed to explain the reddish tinge which even in the days of the Cooper's fame, had seemed somewhat suspicious. The ware of the Cooper Climent was rejected with horror, much to the benefit of his rivals the muggers, who dealt in earthenware. The man of cutty-spoon and ladle saw his trade interrupted, and learned the reason, by his quondom customers coming upon him in wrath to return the goods which were composed of such unhallowed materials, and demand repayment of their money. In this disagreeable predicament, the forlorn artist cited old Mortality into a court of justice,

where he proved that the wood he used in his trade was that of the staves of old wine-pipes bought from smugglers, with whom the country then abounded, a circumstance which fully accounted for their imparting a color to their contents. Old Mortality himself made the fullest declaration, that he had no other purpose in making the assertion, than to check the petulance of the children. But it is easier to take away a good name than to restore it. Cooper Climent's business continued to languish, and he died in a state of poverty.

No. X.

THE Author is now at liberty to say, that the information was conveyed to him by a late amiable and ingenious lady, whose wit and power of remarking and judging of character still survive in the memory of her friends. Her maiden name was Miss Helen Lawson, of Girthhead, and she was wife of Thomas Goldie, Esq. of Craigmuie, Commissary of Dumfries.

Her communication was in these words:

"I had taken for summer lodgings a cottage near the old Abbey of Lincluden. It had formerly been inhabited by a lady who had pleasure in embellishing cottages, which she found perhaps homely, and even poor enough; mine, therefore, possessed many marks of taste and elegance unusual in this species of habitation in Scotland, where a cottage is literally what its name declares.

"From my cottage-door I had a partial view of the old Abbey before mentioned; some of the highest arches were seen over, and some through, the trees scattered along a lane which led down to the ruin, and the strange fantastic shapes of almost all those old ashes accorded wonderfully well with the building they at once shaded and ornamented.

"The Abbey itself from my door was almost on a level with the cottage; but on coming to the end of the lane, it was discovered to be situated on a high perpendicular bank, at the foot of which run the clear waters of the Cluden, where they hasten to join the sweeping Nith,

'Whose distant roaring swells and fa's.'

As my kitchen and parlor were not very far distant, I one day went in to purchase some chickens from a person I heard offering them for sale. It was a little, rather stout-looking woman, who seemed to be between seventy and eighty years of age; she was almost covered with a tartan plaid, and her cap had over it a black silk hood, tied under the chin, a piece of dress still much in use among elderly women of that rank of life

in Scotland; her eyes were dark, and remarkably lively and intelligent; I entered into conversation with her, and began by asking how she maintained herself &c.

"She said that in winter she footed stockings, that is, knit feet to country-people's stockings, which bears about the same relation to stocking-knitting that cobbling does to shoemaking, and is of course both less profitable and less dignified; she likewise taught a few children to read, and in summer she whiles reared a few chickens.

"I said I could venture to guess from her face she had never been married. She laughed heartily at this, and said, 'I maun hae the queerest face that ever was seen, that ye could guess that. Now, do tell me, madam, how ye cam to think sae?' I told her it was from her cheerful disengaged countenance. She said, 'Mem, have ye na far mair reason to be happy than me, wi' a gude husband and a fine family o' bairns, and plenty o' every thing? for me, I'm the puirest o' a' puir bodies, and can hardly contrive to keep mysell alive in a' the wee bits o' ways I hae tell't ye.' After some more conversation, during which I was more and more pleased with the old woman's sensible conversation, and the *naiveté* of her remarks, she rose to go away, when I asked her name. Her countenance suddenly clouded, and she said gravely, rather coloring, "My name is Helen Walker; but your husband kens weel about me."

"In the evening I related how much I had been pleased, and inquired what was extraordinary in the history of the poor woman. Mr. —— said, there were perhaps few more remarkable people than Helen Walker. She had been left an orphan, with the charge of a sister considerably younger than herself, and who was educated and maintained by her exertions. Attached to her by so many ties, therefore, it will not be easy to conceive her feelings, when she found that this only sister must be tried by the laws of her country for child-murder, and upon being called as principal witness against her. The counsel for the prisoner told

Helen, that if she could declare that her sister had made any preparations, however slight, or had given her any intimation on the subject, that such a statement would save her sister's life, as she was the principal witness against her. Helen said, 'It is impossible for me to swear to a falsehood; and, whatever may be the consequence, I will give my oath according to my conscience.'

"The trial came on, and the sister was found guilty and condemned; but, in Scotland, six weeks must elapse between the sentence and the execution, and Helen Walker availed herself of it. The very day of her sister's condemnation, she got a petition drawn up, stating the peculiar circumstances of the case, and that very night set out on foot for London.

"Without introduction or recommendation, with her simple (perhaps ill-expressed) petition, drawn up by some inferior clerk of the court, she presented herself, in her tartan plaid and country attire, to the late Duke of Argyle, who immediately procured the pardon she petitioned for, and Helen returned with it, on foot, just in time to save her sister.

"I was so strongly interested by this narrative, that I determined immediately to prosecute my acquaintance with Helen Walker; but as I was to leave the country next day, I was obliged to defer it till my return in spring, when the first walk I took was to Helen Walker's cottage.

"She had died a short time before. My regret was extreme, and I endeavored to obtain some account of Helen from an old woman who inhabited the other end of her cottage. I inquired if Helen ever spoke of her past history, her journey to London, &c. 'Na,' the old woman said, 'Helen was a wily body, and whene'er ony o' the neebors asked any thing about it, she aye turned the conversation.'

"In short, every answer I received only tended to increase my regret, and raise my opinion of Helen Walker, who could unite so much prudence with so much heroic virtue."

This narrative was inclosed in the following letter to the author, without date or signature:—

"SIR,—The occurrence just related happened to me twenty-six years ago. Helen Walker lies buried in the churchyard of Irongray, about six miles from Dumfries. I once proposed that a small monument should have been erected to commemorate so remarkable a character, but I now prefer leaving it to you to perpetuate her memory in a more durable manner."

The reader is now able to judge how far the author has improved upon, or fallen short of, the pleasing and interesting sketch of high principle and steady affection displayed by Helen Walker, the prototype of the fictitious Jeanie Deans. Mrs. Goldie was unfortunately dead before the author had given his name to these volumes, so he lost all opportunity of thanking that lady for her highly valuable communication. But her daughter, Miss Goldie, obliged him with the following additional information.

"Mrs. Goldie endeavored to collect further particulars of Helen Walker, particularly concerning her journey to London, but found this nearly impossible; as the natural dignity of her character, and a high sense of family respectability, made her so indissolubly connect her sister's disgrace with her own exertions, that none of her neighbors durst ever question her upon the subject. One old woman, a distant relation of Helen's, and who is still living, says she worked a harvest with her, but that she never ventured to ask her about her sister's trial, or her journey to London; 'Helen,' she added, 'was a lofty body, and used a high style o' language.' The same old woman says, that every year Helen received a cheese from her sister, who lived at Whitehaven, and that she always sent a liberal portion of it to herself or to her father's family. This fact, though trivial in itself, strongly marks the affection subsisting between the two sisters, and the complete conviction on the mind of the criminal, that her sister had acted solely from high principle, not from any want of feeling, which another small but characteristic trait

will further illustrate. A gentleman, a relation of Mrs. Goldie's, who happened to be travelling in the North of England, on coming to a small inn, was shown into the parlor by a female servant, who, after cautiously shutting the door, said, 'Sir, I'm Nelly Walker's sister.' Thus practically showing that she considered her sister as better known by her high conduct, than even herself by a different kind of celebrity.

"Mrs. Goldie was extremely anxious to have a tombstone and an inscription upon it, erected in Irongray churchyard; and if Sir Walter Scott will condescend to write the last, a little subscription could be easily raised in the immediate neighborhood, and Mrs. Goldie's wish be thus fulfilled."

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the request of Mrs. Goldie will be most willingly complied with, and without the necessity of any tax on the public. Nor is there much occasion to repeat how much the author conceives himself obliged to his unknown correspondent, who thus supplied him with a theme affording such a pleasing view of the moral dignity of virtue, though unaided by birth, beauty, or talent. If the picture has suffered in the execution, it is from the failure of the author's powers to present in detail the same simple and striking portrait, exhibited in Mrs. Goldie's letter.

POSTSCRIPT.

Although it would be impossible to add much to Mrs. Goldie's picturesque and most interesting account of Helen Walker, the prototype of the imaginary Jeanie Deans, the Editor may be pardoned for introducing two or three anecdotes respecting that excellent person, which he has collected from a volume entitled "Sketches from Nature, by John M'Diarmid," a gentleman who conducts an able provincial paper in the town of Dumfries.

Helen was the daughter of a small farmer in a place called Dalwhairn, in the parish of Irongray; where, after the death of her father, she continued, with the unassuming piety of a Scottish peasant, to support her-

mother by her own unremitted labor and privations; a case so common, that even yet, I am proud to say, few of my countrywomen would shrink from the duty.

Helen Walker was held among her equals *pensy*, that is, proud or conceited; but the facts brought to prove this accusation seem only to evince a strength of character superior to those around her. Thus it was remarked, that when it thundered, she went with her work and her Bible to the front of the cottage, alleging that the Almighty could smite in the city as well as in the field.

Mr. M'Diarmid mentions more particularly the misfortune of her sister, which he supposes to have taken place previous to 1736. Helen Walker, declining every proposal of saving her relation's life at the expense of truth, borrowed a sum of money sufficient for her journey, walked the whole distance to London barefoot, and made her way to John Duke of Argyle. She was heard to say, that, by the Almighty's strength, she had been enabled to meet the Duke at the most critical moment, which, if lost, would have caused the inevitable forfeiture of her sister's life.

Isabella, or Tibby Walker, saved from the fate which impended over her, was married by the person who had wronged her, (named Waugh,) and lived happily for great part of a century, uniformly acknowledging the extraordinary affection to which she owed her preservation.

Helen Walker died about the end of the year 1791, and her remains are interred in the churchyard of her native parish of Irongray, in a romantic cemetery on the banks of the Cairn. That a character so distinguished for her undaunted love of virtue, lived and died in poverty, if not want, serves only to show us how insignificant, in the sight of Heaven, are our principal objects of ambition upon earth.

No. XI.

The author declined giving the real source from which he drew the tragic subject of this history, because, though occurring at a distant period, it might possibly be unpleasing to the feelings of the descendants of the parties. But as he finds an account of the circumstances given in the Notes to Law's Memorials,* by his ingenious friend Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., and also indicated in his reprint of the Rev. Mr. Symson's poems, appended to the Description of Galloway, as the original of the Bride of Lammermoor, the author feels himself now at liberty to tell the tale as he had it from connexions of his own, who lived very near the period, and were closely related to the family of the Bride.

It is well known that the family of Dalrymple, which has produced, within the space of two centuries, as many men of talent, civil and military, and of literary, political, and professional eminence, as any house in Scotland, first rose into distinction in the person of James Dalrymple, one of the most eminent lawyers that ever lived, though the labors of his powerful mind were unhappily exercised on a subject so limited as Scottish Jurisprudence, on which he has composed an admirable work.

He married Margaret, daughter to Rose of Balniel, with whom he obtained a considerable estate. She was an able, politic, and highminded woman, so successful in what she undertook, that the vulgar, no way partial to her husband or her family, imputed her success to necromancy. According to the popular belief, this Dame Margaret purchased the temporal prosperity of her family from the Master whom she served, under a singular condition, which is thus narrated by the historian of her grandson, the great Earl of Stair. "She lived to a great age, and at her death desired that she

* Law's Memorials, p. 226.

might not be put under ground, but that her coffin should be placed upright on one end of it, promising, that while she remained in that situation, the Dalrymples should continue in prosperity. What was the old lady's motive for such a request, or whether she really made such a promise, I cannot take upon me to determine; but it is certain her coffin stands upright in the aisle of the church of Kirkliston, the burial-place of the family."* The talents of this accomplished race were sufficient to have accounted for the dignities which many members of the family attained, without any supernatural assistance. But their extraordinary prosperity was attended by some equally singular family misfortunes, of which that which befell their eldest daughter was at once unaccountable and melancholy.

Miss Janet Dalrymple, daughter of the first Lord Stair, and Dame Margaret Ross, had engaged herself without the knowledge of her parents to the Lord Rutherford, who was not acceptable to them either on account of his political principles, or his want of fortune. The young couple broke a piece of gold together, and pledged their troth in the most solemn manner; and it is said the young lady imprecated dreadful evils on herself should she break her plighted faith. Shortly after, a suitor who was favored by Lord Stair, and still more so by his lady, paid his addresses to Miss Dalrymple. The young lady refused the proposal, and being pressed on the subject, confessed her secret engagement. Lady Stair, a woman accustomed to universal submission, (for even her husband did not dare to contradict her,) treated this objection as a trifle, and insisted upon her daughter yielding her consent to marry the new suitor, David Dunbar, son and heir to David Dunbar of Baldoon in Wigtonshire. The first lover, a man of very high spirit, then interfered by letter, and insisted on the right he had acquired by his troth plighted with the young lady. Lady Stair sent

* Memoirs of John Earl of Stair, by an Impartial Hand. London, printed for C. Cobbet, p. 7.

him for answer, that her daughter, sensible of her undutiful behavior in entering into a contract unsanctioned by her parents, had retracted her unlawful vow, and now refused to fulfil her engagement with him.

The lover, in return, declined positively to receive such an answer from any one but his mistress in person; and as she had to deal with a man who was both of a most determined character, and of too high condition to be trifled with, Lady Stair was obliged to consent to an interview between Lord Rutherford and her daughter. But she took care to be present in person, and argued the point with the disappointed and incensed lover with pertinacity equal to his own. She particularly insisted on the Levitical law, which declares, that a woman shall be free of a vow which her parents dissent from. This is the passage of Scripture she founded on:—

"If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

"If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth;

"And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

"But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her."—Numbers, xxx. 2, 3, 4, 5.

While the mother insisted on these topics, the lover in vain conjured the daughter to declare her own opinion and feelings. She remained totally overwhelmed, as it seemed,—mute, pale, and motionless as a statue. Only at her mother's command, sternly uttered, she summoned strength enough to restore to her plighted suitor the piece of broken gold, which was the emble-

of her troth. On this he burst forth into a tremendous passion, took leave of the mother with maledictions, and as he left the apartment, turned back to say to his weak, if not fickle mistress, "For you, madam, you will be a world's wonder;" a phrase by which some remarkable degree of calamity is usually implied. He went abroad, and returned not again. If the last Lord Rutherford was the unfortunate party, he must have been the third who bore that title, and who died in 1685.

The marriage betwixt Janet Dalrymple and David Dunbar of Baldoon now went forward, the bride showing no repugnance, but being absolutely passive in every thing her mother commanded or advised. On the day of the marriage, which, as was then usual, was celebrated by a great assemblage of friends and relations, she was the same—sad, silent, and resigned, as it seemed, to her destiny. A lady, very nearly connected with the family, told the author that she had conversed on the subject with one of the brothers of the bride, a mere lad at the time, who had ridden before his sister to church. He said her hand, which lay on his as she held her arm round his waist, was as cold and damp as marble. But, full of his new dress, and the part he acted in the procession, the circumstance, which he long afterwards remembered with bitter sorrow and compunction, made no impression on him at the time.

The bridal feast was followed by dancing; the bride and bridegroom retired as usual, when of a sudden the most wild and piercing cries were heard from the nuptial chamber. It was then the custom, to prevent any coarse pleasantry which old times perhaps admitted, that the key of the nuptial chamber should be intrusted to the brideman. He was called upon, but refused at first to give it up, till the shrieks became so hideous that he was compelled to hasten with others to learn the cause. On opening the door, they found the bridegroom lying across the threshold, dreadfully wounded, and streaming with blood. The bride was then sought for: she was found in the corner of the

large chimney, having no covering save her shift, and that dabbled in gore. There she sat grinning at them, mopping and mowing, as I heard the expression used; in a word, absolutely insane. The only words she spoke were, "Tak up your bonny bridegroom." She survived this horrible scene little more than a fortnight, having been married on the 24th of August, and dying on the 12th of September, 1669.

The unfortunate Baldoon recovered from his wounds, but sternly prohibited all inquiries respecting the manner in which he had received them. If a lady, he said, asked him any question upon the subject, he would neither answer her nor speak to her again while he lived; if a gentleman, he would consider it as a mortal affront, and demand satisfaction as having received such. He did not very long survive the dreadful catastrophe, having met with a fatal injury by a fall from his horse, as he rode between Leith and Holyrood-house, of which he died the next day, 28th March, 1682. Thus a few years removed all the principal actors in this frightful tragedy.

Various reports went abroad on this mysterious affair, many of them very inaccurate, though they could hardly be said to be exaggerated. It was difficult at that time to become acquainted with the history of a Scottish family above the lower rank; and strange things sometimes took place there, into which even the law did not scrupulously inquire.

The credulous Mr. Law says, generally, that the Lord President Stair had a daughter, who "being married, the night she was *bride in*, [that is, bedded bride,] was taken from her bridegroom and *harled* [dragged] through the house,-(by spirits, we are given to understand,) and soon afterwards died. Another daughter," he says, "was possessed of an evil spirit."

My friend, Mr. Sharpe, gives another edition of the tale. According to his information, it was the bridegroom who wounded the bride. The marriage, according to this account, had been against her mother's inclination, who had given her consent in these omin-

ous words: "You may marry him, but soon shall you repent it."

I find still another account darkly insinuated in some highly scurrilous and abusive verses, of which I have an original copy. They are docketed as being written, "Upon the late Viscount Stair and his family, by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw. The marginals by William Dunlop, writer in Edinburgh, a son of the Laird of Househill, and nephew to the said Sir William Hamilton." There was a bitter and personal quarrel and rivalry betwixt the author of this libel, a name which it richly deserves, and Lord President Stair; and the lampoon, which is written with much more malice than art, bears the following motto:—

"Stair's neck, mind, wife, sons, grandson, and the rest,
Are wry, false, witch, pests, parricide, possessed."

This malignant satirist, who calls up all the misfortunes of the family, does not forget the fatal bridal of Baldoon. He seems, though his verses are as obscure as unpoetical, to intimate, that the violence done to the bridegroom was by the intervention of the foul fiend to whom the young lady had resigned herself, in case she should break her contract with her first lover. His hypothesis is inconsistent with the account given in the note upon Law's Memorials, but easily reconcilable to the family tradition.

"In al Stair's offspring we no difference know,
They doe the females as the males bestow;
So he of's daughter's marriage gave the ward,
Like a true vassal, to Glenluce's Laird;
He knew what she did to her suitor plight,
If she her faith to Rutherford should slight,
Which, like his own, for greed he broke outright.
Nick did Baldoon's posterior right deride,
And, as first substitute, did seize the bride;
Whate'er he to his mistress did or said,
He threw the bridegroom from the nuptial bed,
Into the chimney did so his rival maul,
His bruised bones ne'er were cured but by the fall.*

* The fall from his horse, by which he was killed.

One of the marginal notes ascribed to William Dunlop, applies to the above lines. "She had betrothed herself to Lord Rutherfoord under horrid imprecations, and afterwards married Baldoon, his nevoy, and her mother was the cause of her breach of faith."

The same tragedy is alluded to in the following couplet and note:—

> "What train of curses that base brood pursues,
> When the young nephew weds old uncle's spouse."

The note on the word *uncle*, explains it as meaning "Rutherfoord, who should have married the Lady Baldoon, was Baldoon's uncle." The poetry of this satire on Lord Stair and his family was, as already noticed, written by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw, a rival of Lord Stair for the situation of President of the Court of Session; a person much inferior to that great lawyer in talents, and equally ill-treated by the calumny or just satire of his contemporaries, as an unjust and partial judge. Some of the notes are by that curious and laborious antiquary Robert Milne, who, as a virulent Jacobite, willingly lent a hand to blacken the family of Stair.*

Another poet of the period, with a very different purpose, has left an elegy, in which he darkly hints at and bemoans the fate of the ill-starred young person, whose very uncommon calamity Whitelaw, Dunlop, and Milne, thought a fitting subject for buffoonery and ribaldry. This bard of milder mood was Andrew Symson, before the Revolution minister of Kirkinner, in Galloway, and after his expulsion as an Episcopalian, following the humble occupation of a printer in Edinburgh. He furnished the family of Baldoon, with which he appears to have been intimate, with an elegy on the tragic event in their family. In this piece, he treats

* I have compared the satire, which occurs in the first volume of the curious little collection called a Book of Scottish Pasquils 1827, with that which has a more full text, and more extended notes, and which is in my own possession, by gift of Thomas Thomson, Esq. Register-Depute. In the second Book of Pasquils, p. 72, is a most abusive epitaph on Sir James Hamilton of Whitelaw.

the mournful occasion of the bride's death with mysterious solemnity.

The verses bear this title—"On the unexpected death of the virtuous Lady Mrs. Janet Dalrymple, Lady Baldoon, younger," and afford us the precise dates of the catastrophe, which could not otherwise have been easily ascertained. "Nupta August 12. Domum Ducta August 24. Obiit September 12. Sepult. September 30, 1669." The form of the elegy is a dialogue betwixt a passenger and a domestic servant. The first, recollecting that he had passed that way lately, and seen all around enlivened by the appearances of mirth and festivity, is desirous to know what had changed so gay a scene into mourning. We preserve the reply of the servant as a specimen of Mr. Symson's verses, which are not of the first quality:—

> ——————"Sir, 'tis truth you've told,
> We did enjoy great mirth; but now, ah me!
> Our joyful song's turn'd to an elegie.
> A virtuous lady, not long since a bride,
> Was to a hopeful plant by marriage tied,
> And brought home hither. We did all rejoice,
> Even for her sake. But presently our voice,
> Was turn'd to mourning for that little time
> That she'd enjoy: She waned in her prime,
> For Atropos, with her impartial knife,
> Soon cut her thread, and therewithal her life;
> And for the time we may it well remember,
> It being in unfortunate September;
> Where we must leave her till the resurrection,
> 'Tis then the Saints enjoy their full perfection."*

Mr. Symson also poured forth his elegiac strains upon the fate of the widowed bridegroom, on which subject, after a long and querulous effusion, the poet arrives at the sound conclusion, that if Baldoon had walked on foot, which it seems was his general cus-

* This elegy is reprinted in the appendix to a topographical work by the same author, entitled "A Large Description of Galloway, by Andrew Symson, Minister of Kirkinner," 8vo. Taits, Edinburgh, 1823. The reverend gentleman's elegies are extremely rare, nor did the author ever see a copy but his own, which is bound up with the Tripatriarchicon, a religious poem from the Biblical History, by the same author.

tom, he would have escaped perishing by a fall from horseback. As the work in which it occurs is so scarce as almost to be unique, and as it gives us the most full account of one of the actors in this tragic tale which we have rehearsed, we will, at the risk of being tedious, insert some short specimens of Mr. Symson's composition. It is entitled,—

"A Funeral Elegie, occasioned by the sad and much lamented death of that worthily respected, and very much accomplished gentleman, David Dunbar, younger of Baldoon, only son and apparent heir to the right worshipful Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, Knight Baronet. He departed this life on March 28, 1682, having received a bruise by a fall, as he was riding the day preceding betwixt Leith and Holy-Rood-House; and was honorably interred in the Abbey church of Holy-Rood-House, on April 4, 1682."

"Men might, and very justly too, conclude
Me guilty of the worst ingratitude,
Should I be silent, or should I forbear
At this sad accident to shed a tear;
A tear! said I? ah! that's a petit thing,
A very lean, slight, slender offering,
Too mean, I'me sure, for me, wherewith t'attend
The unexpected funeral of my friend—
A glass of briny tears charg'd up to th' brim,
Would be too few for me to shed for him."

The poet proceeds to state his intimacy with the deceased, and the constancy of the young man's attendance on public worship, which was regular, and had such effect upon two or three others that were influenced by his example—

"So that my Muse 'gainst Priscian avers,
He, only he, *were* my parishioners;
Yea, and my only hearers."

He then describes the deceased in person and manners, from which it appears that more accomplishments were expected in the composition of a fine gentleman in ancient than modern times:

"His body, though not very large or tall,
Was sprightly, active, yea and strong withal.
His constitution was, if right I've guess'd,
Blood mixt with choler, sain to be the best.
In's gesture, converse, speech, discourse, attire,
He practis'd that which wise men still admire,
Commend and recommend. What's that? you'll say;
'Tis this: He ever choos'd the middle way
'Twixt both th' extremes. Amost in ev'ry thing
He did the like, 'tis worth our noticing:
Sparing, yet not a niggard; liberal,
And yet not lavish or a prodigal,
As knowing when to spend and when to spare;
And that's a lesson which not many are
Acquainted with. He bashful was, yet daring
When he saw cause, and yet therein but sparing;
Familiar, yet not common, for he knew
To condescend, and keep his distance too.
He us'd, and that most commonly, to go
On foot; I wish that he had still done so.
Th' affairs of court were unto him well known:
And yet meanwhile he slighted not his own.
He knew full well how to behave at court,
And yet but seldome did thereto resort;
But lov'd the country life, choos'd to inure
Himself to past'rage and agriculture;
Proving, improving, ditching, trenching, draining,
Viewing, reviewing, and by those means gaining;
Planting, transplanting, levelling, erecting
Walls, chambers, houses, terraces; projecting
Now this, now that device, this draught, that measure,
That might advance his profit with his pleasure.
Quick in his bargains, honest in commerce,
Just in his dealings, being much averse
From quirks of law, still ready to refer
His cause t' an honest country arbiter.
He was acquainted with cosmography,
Arithmetic, and modern history;
With architecture and such arts as these,
Which I may call specific sciences
Fit for a gentleman; and surely he
That knows them not, at least in some degree,
May brook the title, but he wants the thing,
Is but a shadow scarce worth noticing.
He learn'd the French, be't spoken to his praise,
In very little more than fourty days."

Then comes the full burst of woe, in which, instead of saying much himself, the poet informs us what the ancients would have said on such an occasion:

"A heathen poet, at the news, no doubt,
Would have exclaim'd, and furiously cry'd out
Against the fates, the destinies and starrs,
What! this the effect of planetarie warrs!
We might have seen him rage and rave, yea worse,
'Tis very like we might have heard him curse
The year, the month, the day, the hour, the place,
The company, the wager, and the race;
Decry all recreations, with the names
Of Isthmian, Pythian, and Olympic games;
Exclaim against them all both old and new,
Both the Nemæan and the Lethæan too:
Adjudge all persons under highest pain
Always to walk on foot, and then again
Order all horses to be hough'd, that we
Might never more the like adventure see."

Supposing our readers have had enough of Mr. Symson's verses, and finding nothing more in his poem worthy of transcription, we return to the tragic story.

It is needless to point out to the intelligent reader, that the witchcraft of the mother consisted only in the ascendency of a powerful mind over a weak and melancholy one, and that the harshness with which she exercised her superiority in a case of delicacy, had driven her daughter first to despair, then to frenzy. Accordingly, the author has endeavored to explain the tragic tale on this principle. Whatever resemblance Lady Ashton may be supposed to possess to the celebrated Dame Margaret Ross, the reader must not suppose that there was any idea of tracing the portrait of the first Lord Viscount Stair in the tricky and mean-spirited Sir William Ashton. Lord Stair, whatever might be his moral qualities, was certainly one of the first statesmen and lawyers of his age.

The imaginary castle of Wolf's Crag has been identified by some lover of locality with that of Fast Castle. The author is not competent to judge of the resemblance betwixt the real and imaginary scene, having never seen Fast Castle except from the sea. But fortalices of this description are found occupying, like ospreys' nests, projecting rocks, or promontories, in many parts of the eastern coast of Scotland; and the position of Fast Castle seems certainly to resemble

that of Wolf's Crag, as much as any other, while its vicinity to the mountain ridge of Lammermoor, renders the assimilation a probable one.

We have only to add, that the death of the unfortunate bridegroom, by a fall from horseback, has been in the novel transferred to the no less unfortunate lover.

No. XII.

GALWEGIAN LOCALITIES AND PERSONAGES WHICH HAVE BEEN SUPPOSED TO BE ALLUDED TO IN GUY MANNERING.

An old English Proverb says, that more know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows; and the influence of the adage seems to extend to works composed under the influence of an idle or foolish planet. Many corresponding circumstances are detected by readers, of which the author did not suspect the existence. He must, however, regard it as a great compliment, that in detailing incidents purely imaginary, he has been so fortunate in approximating reality, as to remind his readers of actual occurrences. It is therefore with pleasure he notices some pieces of local history and tradition, which have been supposed to coincide with the fictitious persons, incidents, and scenery of Guy Mannering.

The prototype of Dirk Hatteraick is considered as having been a Dutch skipper called Yawkins. This man was well known on the coast of Galloway and Dumfries-shire, as sole proprietor and master of a *Buckkar*, or smuggling lugger, called the Black Prince. Being distinguished by his nautical skill and intrepidity, his vessel was frequently freighted and his own services employed, by French, Dutch, Manx, and Scottish smuggling companies.

A person well known by the name of Buckkar-tea, from having been a noted smuggler of that article, and also by that of Bogle-Bush, the place of his residence, assured my kind informant, Mr. Train, that he had frequently seen upwards of two hundred Lingtow-men assemble at one time, and go off into the interior of the country, fully laden with contraband goods.

In those halcyon days of the free trade, the fixed price for carrying a box of tea, or bale of tobacco, from the coast of Galloway to Edinburgh, was fifteen shillings,

and a man with two horses carried four such packages. The trade was entirely destroyed by Mr. Pitt's celebrated commutation law, which, by reducing the duties upon excisable articles, enabled the lawful dealer to compete with the smuggler. The statute was called in Galloway and Dumfries-shire, by those who had thriven upon the contraband trade, "the burning and starving act."

Sure of such active assistance on shore, Yawkins demeaned himself so boldly, that his mere name was a terror to the officers of the revenue. He availed himself of the fears which his presence inspired on one particular night, when happening to be ashore with a considerable quantity of goods in his sole custody, a strong party of excisemen came down on him. Far from shunning the attack, Yawkins sprung forward, shouting, "Come on, my lads; Yawkins is before you." The revenue officers were intimidated, and relinquished their prize, though defended only by the courage and address of a single man. On his proper element, Yawkins was equally successful. On one occasion, he was landing his cargo at the Manxman's lake, near Kirkcudbright, when two revenue-cutters (the Pigmy and the Dwarf) hove in sight at once on different tacks, the one coming round by the Isles of Fleet, the other between the point of Rueberry and the Muckle Ron. The dauntless free-trader instantly weighed anchor, and bore down right between the luggers, so close that he tossed his hat on the deck of the one, and his wig on that of the other, hoisted a cask to his maintop, to show his occupation, and bore away under an extraordinary pressure of canvas, without receiving injury. To account for these and other hair-breadth escapes, popular superstition alleged that Yawkins insured his celebrated Buckkar by compounding with the devil for one-tenth of his crew every voyage. How they arranged the separation of the stock and tithes, is left to our conjecture. The Buckkar was perhaps called the Black Prince in honor of the formidable insurer.

The Black Prince used to discharge her cargo at Luce, Balcarry, and elsewhere on the coast; but her

owner's favorite landing-places were at the entrance of the Dee and the Cree, near the old castle of Rueberry, about six miles below Kirkcudbright. There is a cave of large dimensions in the vicinity of Rueberry, which, from its being frequently used by Yawkins, and his supposed connexions with the smugglers on the shore, is now called Dirk Hatteraick's cave. Strangers who visit this place, the scenery of which is highly romantic, are also shown, under the name of the Gauger's Loup, a tremendous precipice, being the same, as it is asserted, from which Kennedy was precipitated.

Meg Merrilies is in Galloway considered as having had her origin in the traditions concerning the celebrated Flora Marshal, one of the royal consorts of Willie Marshal, more commonly called the *Caird* of Barullion, King of the Gipsies of the Western Lowlands. That potentate was himself deserving of notice, from the following peculiarities. He was born in the parish of Kirkmichael, about the year 1671; and as he died at Kirkcudbright, 23d November, 1792, he must then have been in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age. It cannot be said that this unusually long lease of existence was noted by any peculiar excellence of conduct or habits of life. Willie had been pressed or enlisted in the army seven times; and had deserted as often; besides three times running away from the naval service. He had been seventeen times lawfully married; and besides such a reasonably large share of matrimonial comforts, was, after his hundredth year, the avowed father of four children, by less legitimate affections. He subsisted in his extreme old age by a pension from the present Earl of Selkirk's grandfather. Willie Marshal is buried in Kirkcudbright Church, where his monument is still shown, decorated with a scutcheon suitably blazoned with two tups' horns and two *cutty* spoons.

In his youth he occasionally took an evening walk on the highway, with the purpose of assisting travellers by relieving them of the weight of their purses. On one occasion, the Caird of Barullion robbed the Laird of Bargally, at a place between Carsphairn and

Dalmellington. His purpose was not achieved without a severe struggle, in which the Gipsy lost his bonnet, and was obliged to escape, leaving it on the road. A respectable farmer happened to be the next passenger, and seeing the bonnet, alighted, took it up, and rather imprudently put it on his own head. At this instant, Bargally came up with some assistants, and recognizing the bonnet, charged the farmer of Bantoberick with having robbed him, and took him into custody. There being some likeness between the parties, Bargally persisted in his charge, and though the respectability of the farmer's character was proved or admitted, his trial before the Circuit Court came on accordingly. The fatal bonnet lay on the table of the court; Bargally swore that it was the identical article worn by the man who robbed him; and he and others likewise deponed that they had found the accused on the spot where the crime was committed, with the bonnet on his head. The case looked gloomily for the prisoner, and the opinion of the judge seemed unfavorable. But there was a person in court who knew well both who did, and who did not, commit the crime. This was the Caird of Barullion, who, thrusting himself up to the bar, near the place where Bargally was standing, suddenly seized on the bonnet, put it on his head, and looking the Laird full in the face, asked him, with a voice which attracted the attention of the Court and crowded audience—"Look at me, sir, and tell me, by the oath you have sworn—Am not *I* the man who robbed you between Carsphairn and Dalmellington?" Bargally replied, in great astonishment, "By Heaven! you are the very man."—"You see what sort of memory this gentleman has," said the volunteer pleader: "he swears to the bonnet whatever features are under it. If you yourself, my Lord, will put it on your head, he will be willing to swear that your Lordship was the party who robbed him between Carsphairn and Dalmellington." The tenant of Bantoberick was unanimously acquitted, and thus Willie Marshal ingeniously contrived to save an innocent man from danger, without incurring any him-

self, since Bargally's evidence must have seemed to every one too fluctuating to be relied upon.

While the King of the Gipsies was thus laudably occupied, his royal consort, Flora, contrived, it is said, to steal the hood from the Judge's gown; for which offence, combined with her presumptive guilt as a gipsy, she was banished to New-England, whence she never returned.

Now, I cannot grant that the idea of Meg Merrilies was, in the first concoction of the character, derived from Flora Marshal, seeing I have already said she was identified with Jean Gordon, and as I have not the Laird of Bargally's apology for charging the same fact on two several individuals. Yet I am quite content that Meg should be considered as a representative of her sect and class in general—Flora, as well as others.

The other instances in which my Gallovidian readers have obliged me, by assigning to

> Airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name,

shall also be sanctioned so far as the Author may be entitled to do so. I think the facetious Joe Miller records a case pretty much in point; where the keeper of a Museum, while showing, as he said, the very sword with which Balaam was about to kill his ass, was interrupted by one of the visitors, who reminded him that Balaam was not possessed of a sword, but only wished for one. "True, sir," replied the ready-witted Cicerone; "but this is the very sword he wished for." The Author, in application of this story, has only to add, that though ignorant of the coincidence between the fictions of the tale and some real circumstances, he is contented to believe he must unconsciously have thought or dreamed of the last, while engaged in the composition of Guy Mannering.

No. XIII.

EXTRACT FROM THE PRELIMINARY EPISTLE OF MR. LAWRENCE TEMPLETON TO THE REV. DR. DRYASDUST, PREFIXED TO IVANHOE.

When we first talked over together that class of productions, in one of which the private and family affairs of your learned northern friend, Mr. Oldbuck of Monkbarns, were so unjustifiably exposed to the public, some discussion occurred between us concerning the cause of the popularity these works have attained in this idle age, which, whatever other merit they possess, must be admitted to be hastily written, and in violation of every rule assigned to the epopeia. It seemed then to be your opinion, that the charm lay entirely in the art with which the unknown author had availed himself, like a second M'Pherson, of the antiquarian stores which lay scattered around him, supplying his own indolence or poverty of invention, by the incidents which had actually taken place in his country at no distant period, by introducing real characters, and scarcely suppressing real names. It was not above sixty or seventy years, you observed, since the whole north of Scotland was under a state of government nearly as simple and as patriarchal as those of our good allies the Mohawks and Iroquois. Admitting that the author cannot himself be supposed to have witnessed those times, he must have lived, you observed, among persons who had acted and suffered in them; and even within these thirty years, such an infinite change has taken place in the manners of Scotland, that men look back upon the habits of society proper to their immediate ancestors, as we do on those of the reign of Queen Anne, or even the period of the Revolution. Having thus materials of every kind lying strewed around him, there was little, you observed, to embarrass the author, but the difficulty of choice. It was no wonder, therefore, that, having begun to work

a mine so plentiful, he should have derived from his works fully more credit and profit than the facility of his labors merited.

Admitting (as I could not deny) the general truth of these conclusions, I cannot but think it strange that no attempt has been made to excite an interest for the traditions and manners of Old England, similar to that which has been obtained in behalf of those of our poorer and less celebrated neighbors. The Kendal green, though its date is more ancient, ought surely to be as dear to our feelings, as the variegated tartans of the north. The name of Robin Hood, if duly conjured with, should raise a spirit as soon as that of Rob Roy; and the patriots of England deserve no less their renown in our modern circles, than the Bruces and Wallaces of Caledonia. If the scenery of the south be less romantic and sublime than that of the northern mountains, it must be allowed to possess in the same proportion superior softness and beauty; and upon the whole, we feel ourselves entitled to exclaim with the patriotic Syrian——"Are not Pharpar and Abana rivers of Damascus, better than all the rivers of Israel?"

Your objections to such an attempt, my dear doctor, were, you may remember, two-fold. You insisted upon the advantages which the Scotsman possessed, from the very recent existence of that state of society in which his scene was to be laid. Many now alive, you remarked, well remembered persons who had not only seen the celebrated Roy M'Gregor, but had feasted, and even fought with him. All those minute circumstances belonging to private life and domestic character, all that gives verisimilitude to a narrative, and individuality to the persons introduced, is still known and remembered in Scotland; whereas in England, civilization has been so long complete, that our ideas of our ancestors are only to be gleaned from musty records and chronicles, the authors of which seem perversely to have conspired to suppress in their narratives all interesting details, in order to find room for flowers of monkish eloquence, or trite reflections up-

morals. To match an English and a Scottish author in the rival task of embodying and reviving the traditions of their respective countries, would be, you alleged, in the highest degree unequal and unjust. The Scottish magician, you said, was like Lucan's witch, at liberty to walk over the recent field of battle, and to select for the subject of resuscitation by his sorceries, a body whose limbs had recently quivered with existence, and whose throat had but just uttered the last note of agony. Such a subject even the powerful Erictho was compelled to select, as alone capable of being reanimated even by *her* potent magic—

> ——gelidas leto scrutata medullas,
> Pulmonis rigidi stantea sine vulnere fibras
> Invenit, et vocem defuncto in corpore quærit.

The English author, on the other hand, without supposing him less of a conjuror than the Northern Warlock, can, you observed, only have the liberty of selecting his subject amidst the dust of antiquity, where nothing was to be found but dry, sapless, mouldering, and disjointed bones, such as those which filled the valley of Jehoshaphat. You expressed, besides, your apprehension, that the unpatriotic prejudices of my countrymen would not allow fair play to such a work as that of which I endeavored to demonstrate the probable success. And this, you said, was not entirely owing to the more general prejudice in favor of that which is foreign, but that it rested partly upon improbabilities, arising out of the circumstances in which the English reader is placed. If you describe to him a set of wild manners, and a state of primitive society existing in the Highlands of Scotland, he is much disposed to acquiesce in the truth of what is asserted. And reason good. If he be of the ordinary class of readers, he has either never seen those remote districts at all, or he has wandered through those desolate regions in the course of a summer-tour, eating bad dinners, sleeping on truckle-beds, stalking from desolation to desolation, and fully prepared to believe the strangest things that could be told him of a people,

wild and extravagant enough to be attached to scenery so extraordinary. But the same worthy person, when placed in his own snug parlor, and surrounded by all the comforts of an Englishman's fire-side, is not half so much disposed to believe that his own ancestors led a very different life from himself; that the shattered tower, which now forms a vista from his window, once held a baron who would have hung him up at his own door without any form of trial; that the hinds, by whom his little pet-farm is managed, a few centuries ago would have been his slaves; and that the complete influence of feudal tyranny once extended over the neighboring village, where the attorney is now a man of more importance than the lord of the manor.

While I own the force of these objections, I must confess, at the same time, that they do not appear to me to be altogether insurmountable. The scantiness of materials is indeed a formidable difficulty; but no one knows better than Dr. Dryasdust, that to those deeply read in antiquity, hints concerning the private life of our ancestors lie scattered through the pages of our various historians, bearing, indeed, a slender proportion to the other matters of which they treat, but still, when collected together, sufficient to throw considerable light upon the *vie privée* of our forefathers; indeed, I am convinced, that however I myself may fail in the ensuing attempt, yet, with more labor in collecting, or more skill in using, the materials within his reach, illustrated as they have been by the labors of Dr. Henry, of the late Mr. Strutt, and, above all, of Mr. Sharon Turner, an abler hand would have been successful; and therefore I protest, beforehand, against any argument which may be founded on the failure of the present experiment.

On the other hand, I have already said, that if any thing like a true picture of old English manners could be drawn, I would trust to the good-nature and good sense of my countrymen for insuring its favorable reception.

Having thus replied, to the best of my power, to the first class of your objections, or at least having shown

my resolution to overleap the barriers which your prudence has raised, I will be brief in noticing that which is more peculiar to myself. It seemed to be your opinion, that the very office of an antiquary, employed in grave, and, as the vulgar will sometimes allege, in minute and toilsome research, must be considered as incapacitating him from successfully compounding a tale of this sort. But permit me to say, my dear doctor, that this objection is rather formal than substantial. It is true, that such slighter compositions might not suit the severer genius of our friend Mr. Oldbuck. Yet Horace Walpole wrote a goblin tale which has thrilled through many a bosom; and Gerge Ellis could transfer all the playful fascination of a humor, as delightful as it was uncommon, into his Abridgement of the Ancient Metrical Romances.

So that, however I may have occasion to rue my present audacity, I have at least the most respectable precedents in my favor.

Still the severer antiquary may think that, by thus intermingling fiction with truth, I am polluting the well of history with modern inventions, and impressing upon the rising generation false ideas of the age which I describe. I cannot but in some sense admit the force of this reasoning, which I yet hope to traverse by the following considerations.

It is true, that I neither can, nor do, pretend to the observation of complete accuracy, even in matters of outward costume, much less in the more important points of language and manners. But the same motive which prevents my writing the dialogue of the piece in Anglo-Saxon or in Norman-French, and which prohibits my sending forth to the public this essay printed with the types of Caxton or Winken de Worde, prevents my attempting to confine myself within the limits of the period in which my story is laid. It is necessary, for exciting interest of any kind, that the subject assumed should be, as it were, translated into the manners as well as the language of the age we live in. No fascination has ever been attached to oriental literature, equal to that produced by Mr. Galland's first

translation of the Arabian Tales; in which, retaining on the one hand the splendor of eastern costume, and on the other the wildness of eastern fiction, he mixed these with just so much ordinary feeling and expression, as rendered them interesting and intelligible, while he abridged the long-winded narratives, curtailed the monotonous reflections, and rejected the endless repetitions of the Arabian original. The tales, therefore, though less purely oriental than in their first concoction, were eminently better fitted for the European market, and obtained an unrivalled degree of public favor, which they certainly would never have gained had not the manners and style been in some degree familiarized to the feelings and habits of the western reader.

In point of justice, therefore, to the multitudes who will, I trust, devour this book with avidity, I have so far explained our ancient manners in modern language, and so far detailed the characters and sentiments of my persons, that the modern reader will not find himself, I should hope, much trammelled by the repulsive dryness of mere antiquity. In this, I respectfully contend, I have in no respect exceeded the fair license due to the author of a fictitious composition. The late ingenious Mr. Strutt, in his romance of Queen-Hoo-Hall, acted upon another principle, and in distinguishing between what was ancient and modern, forgot, as it appears to me, that extensive neutral ground, the large proportion, that is, of manners and sentiments which are common to us and our ancestors, having been handed down unaltered from them to us, or which, arising out of the principles of our common nature, must have existed alike in either state of society. In this manner, a man of talent, and of great antiquarian erudition, limited the popularity of his work, by excluding from it every thing which was not sufficiently obsolete to be altogether forgotten and unintelligible.

The license which I would here vindicate, is so necessary to the execution of my plan, that I will crave

your patience while I illustrate my argument a little farther.

He who first opens Chaucer, or any other ancient poet, is so much struck with the obsolete spelling, multiplied consonants, and antiquated appearance of the language, that he is apt to lay the work down in despair, as encrusted too deep with the rust of antiquity, to permit his judging of its merits or tasting its beauties. But if some intelligent and accomplished friend points out to him, that the difficulties by which he is startled are more in appearance than reality, if, by reading aloud to him, or by reducing the ordinary words to the modern autography, he satisfies his proselyte that only about one-tenth part of the words employed are in fact obsolete, the novice may be easily persuaded to approach the "well of English undefiled," with the certainty that a slender degree of patience will enable him to enjoy both the humor and the pathos with which old Geoffrey delighted the age of Cressy and of Poictiers.

To pursue this a little farther, if our neophyte, strong in the new-born love of antiquity, were to undertake to imitate what he had learnt to admire, it must be allowed he would act very injudiciously, if he were to select from the Glossary the obsolete words which it contains, and employ those exclusively of all phrases and vocables retained in modern days. This was the error of the unfortunate Chatterton. In order to give his language the appearance of antiquity, he rejected every word that was modern, and produced a dialect entirely different from any that had ever been spoken in Great Britain. He who would imitate an ancient language with success, must attend rather to its grammatical character, turn of expression, and mode of arrangement, than labor to collect extraordinary and antiquated terms, which, as I have already averred, do not in ancient authors approach the number of words still in use, though perhaps somewhat altered in sense and spelling, in the proportion of one to ten.

What I have applied to language, is still more justly applicable to sentiments and manners. The passions,

the sources from which these must spring in all their modifications, are generally the same in all ranks and conditions, all countries and ages; and it follows, as a matter of course, that the opinions, habits of thinking, and actions, however influenced by the peculiar state of society, must still, upon the whole, bear a strong resemblance to each other. Our ancestors were not more distinct from us, surely, than Jews are from Christians; they had "eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions;" were "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer" as ourselves. The tenor, therefore, of their affections and feelings, must have borne the same general proportion to our own.

It follows, therefore, that of the materials which an author has to use in a romance, or fictitious composition, such as I have ventured to attempt, he will find that a great proportion, both of language and manners, is as proper to the present time as to those in which he has laid his time of action. The freedom of choice which this allows him, is therefore much greater, and the difficulty of his task much more diminished than at first appears. To take an illustration from a sister art, the antiquarian details may be said to represent the peculiar features of a landscape under delineation of the pencil. His feudal tower must arise in due majesty; the figures which he introduces must have the costume and character of their age; the piece must represent the peculiar features of the scene which he has chosen for his subject, with all its appropriate elevation of rock, or precipitate descent of cataract. His general coloring, too, must be copied from Nature. The sky must be clouded or serene, according to the climate, and the general tints must be those which prevail in a natural landscape. So far the painter is bound down by the rules of his art, to a precise imitation of the features of Nature; but it is not required that he should descend to copy all her more minute features, or represent with absolute exactness the very herbs, flowers, and trees, with which the spot is decorated.

These, as well as the more minute points of light and shadow, are attributes proper to scenery in general, natural to each situation, and subject to the artist's disposal, as his taste or pleasure may dictate.

It is true, that this license is confined in either case within legitimate bounds. The painter must introduce no ornament inconsistent with the climate or country of his landscape; he must not plant cypress trees upon Inch-Merrin, or Scotch firs among the ruins of Persepolis; and the author lies under a corrosponding restraint. However far he may venture in a more full detail of passions and feelings, than is to be found in the ancient compositions which he imitates, he must introduce nothing inconsistent with the manners of the age; his knights, squires, grooms, and yeomen, may be more fully drawn than in the hard, dry delineations of an ancient illuminated manuscript, but the character and costume of the age must remain inviolate; they must be the same figures, drawn by a better pencil, or to speak more modestly, executed in an age when the principles of art were better understood. His language must not be exclusively obsolete and unintelligible; but he should admit, if possible, no word or turn of phraseology betraying an origin directly modern. It is one thing to make use of the language and sentiments which are common to ourselves and our forefathers, and it is another to invest them with the sentiments and dialect exclusively proper to their descendants.

This, my dear friend, I have found the most difficult part of my task; and, to speak frankly, I hardly expect to satisfy your less partial judgment, and more extensive knowledge of such subjects, since I have hardly been able to please my own.

I am conscious that I shall be found still more faulty in the tone of keeping and costume, by those who may be disposed rigidly to examine my Tale, with reference to the manners of the exact period in which my actors flourished. It may be that I have introduced little which can positively be termed modern; but, on the other hand, it is extremely probable that I may

have confused the manners of two or three centuries, and introduced, during the reign of Richard the First, circumstances appropriated to a period either considerably earlier, or a good deal later than that era. It is my comfort, that errors of this kind will escape the general class of readers, and that I may share in the ill-deserved applause of those architects, who, in their modern Gothic, do not hesitate to introduce, without rule or method, ornaments proper to different styles and to different periods of the art. Those whose extensive researches have given them the means of judging my backslidings with more severity, will probably be lenient in proportion to their knowledge of the difficulty of my task. My honest and neglected friend Ingulphus, has furnished me with many a valuable hint, but the light afforded by the Monk of Croydon, and Geoffrey de Vinsauff, is dimmed by such a conglomeration of uninteresting and unintelligible matter, that we gladly fly for relief to the delightful pages of the gallant Froissart, although he flourished at a period so much more remote from the date of my history. If, therefore, my dear friend, you have generosity enough to pardon the presumptuous attempt, to frame for myself a minstrel coronet, partly out of the pearls of pure antiquity, and partly from the Bristol stones and paste, with which I have endeavored to imitate them, I am convinced your opinion of the difficulty of the task will reconcile you to the imperfect manner of its execution.

Of my materials I have but little to say: they may be chiefly found in the singular Anglo-Norman MS., which Sir Arthur Wardour preserves with such jealous care in the third drawer of his oaken cabinet, scarcely allowing any one to touch it, and being himself not able to read one syllable of its contents. I should never have got his consent, on my visit to Scotland, to read in those precious pages for so many hours, had I not promised to designate it by some emphatic mode of printing, as

The Wardour Manuscript;

giving it, thereby, an individuality as important as the Bannatyne MS., the Auchinleck MS., and any other monument of the patience of a Gothic scrivener. I have sent, for your private consideration, a list of the contents of this curious piece, which I shall perhaps subjoin, with your approbation, to the third volume of my Tale, in case the printer's devil should continue impatient for copy, when the whole of my narrative has been imposed.

Adieu, my dear friend; I have said enough to explain, if not to vindicate, the attempt which I have made, and which, in spite of your doubts, and my own incapacity, I am still willing to believe has not been altogether made in vain.

I hope you are now well recovered from your spring fit of the gout, and shall be happy if the advice of your learned physician should recommend a tour to these parts. Several curiosities have been lately dug up near the wall, as well as at the ancient station of Habitancum. Talking of the latter, I suppose you have long since heard the news, that a sulky churlish boor has destroyed the ancient statue, or rather bas-relief, popularly called Robin of Redesdale. It seems Robin's fame attracted more visitants than was consistent with the growth of the heather, upon a moor worth a shilling an acre. Reverend as you write yourself, be revengeful for once, and pray with me that he may be visited with such a fit of the stone, as if he had all the fragments of poor Robin in that region of his viscera where the disease holds its seat. Tell this not in Gath, lest the Scots rejoice that they have at length found a parallel instance among their neighbors, to that barbarous deed which demolished Arthur's oven. But there is no end to lamentation, when we betake ourselves to such subjects. My respectful compliments attend Miss Dryasdust; I endeavored to match the spectacles, agreeably to her commission, during my late journey to London, and hope she has received them safe, and found them satisfactory. I send this by the blind carrier, so that probably it may be some time upon its journey.

No. XIV.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE TALE OF "THE KYNG AND THE HERMITE," FROM THE "BRITISH BIBLIOGRAPHER."

KING EDWARD (we are not told which among the monarchs of that name, but, from his temper and habits, we may suppose Edward IV.) sets out from his court to a gallant hunting-match in Sherwood forest, in which, as is not unusual for princes in romance, he falls in with a deer of extraordinary size and swiftness, and pursues it closely, till he has outstripped his whole retinue, tired out hounds and horse, and finds himself alone under the gloom of an extensive forest, upon which night is descending. Under the apprehensions natural to a situation so uncomfortable, the king recollects that he has heard how poor men, when apprehensive of a bad night's lodging, pray to Saint Julian, who, in the Romish calendar, stands Quarter-Master-General to all forlorn travellers that render him due homage. Edward put up his orisons accordingly, and by the guidance, doubtless, of the good Saint, reaches a small path, conducting him to a chapel in the forest, having a hermit's cell in its close vicinity. The King hears the reverend man, with a companion of his solitude, telling his beads within, and meekly requests of him quarters for the night. "I have no accommodation for such a lord as ye be," said the Hermit. "I live here in the wilderness upon roots and rinds, and may not receive into my dwelling even the poorest wretch that lives, unless it were to save his life." The king inquires the way to the next town, and, understanding it is by a road which he cannot find without difficulty, even if he had daylight to befriend him, he declares, that with or without the Hermit's consent, he is determined to be his guest that night. He is admitted accordingly, not without a hint from the Recluse, that were he himself out of his priestly weeds, he would care little for his threats of using violence, and that he gives way to him not out of intimidation, but simply to avoid scandal.

The King is admitted into the cell—two bundles of straw are shaken down for his accommodation, and he comforts himself that he is now under shelter, and that

"A night will soon be gone."

Other wants, however, arise. The guest becomes clamorous for supper, observing,

"For certainly, as I you say,
I ne had never so sorry a day,
That I ne had a merry night."

But this indication of his taste for good cheer, joined to the annunciation of his being a follower of the Court, who had lost himself at the great hunting-match, cannot induce the niggard Hermit to produce better fare than bread and cheese, for which his guest showed little appetite; and "thin drink," which was even less acceptable. At length the King presses his host on a point to which he had more than once alluded, without obtaining a satisfactory reply:

"Then said the King, 'by Godys grace,
Thou wert in a merry place,
To shoot should thou lere;
When the foresters go to rest,
Sometyme thou might have of the best,
All of the wild deer;
I wold hold it for no scathe,
Though thou hadst bow and arrows baith,
Althoff thou best a Frere.'"

The Hermit, in return, expresses his apprehension that his guest means to drag him into some confession of offence against the forest laws, which, being betrayed to the King, might cost him his life. Edward answers by fresh assurances of secrecy, and again urges on him the necessity of procuring some venison. The Hermit replies, by once more insisting on the duties incumbent upon him as a churchman, and continues to affirm himself free from all such breaches of order:—

"Many day I have here been,
And flesh-meat I eat never,
But milk of the kye;

Warm thee well, and go to sleep,
And I will lap thee with my cope
Softly to lye."

It would seem that the manuscript is here imperfect, for we do not find the reasons which finally induce the curtal Friar to amend the King's cheer. But acknowledging his guest to be such a "good fellow" as has seldom graced his board, the holy man at length produces the best his cell affords. Two candles are placed on a table, white bread and baked pasties are displayed by the light, besides choice of venison, both salt and fresh, from which they select collops. "I might have eaten my bread dry," said the King, "had I not pressed thee on the score of archery, but now have I dined like a prince—if we had but drink enow."

This too is afforded by the hospitable anchorite, who dispatches an assistant to fetch a pot of four gallons from a secret corner near his bed, and the whole three set in to serious drinking. This amusement is superintended by the Friar, according to the recurrence of certain fustian words, to be repeated by every compotator in turn before he drank—a species of High Jinks, as it were, by which they regulated their potations, as toasts were given in latter times. The one toper says, *fusty bandias*, to which the other is obliged to reply, *strike pantnere*, and the Friar passes many jests on the King's want of memory, who sometimes forgets the words of action. The night is spent in this jolly pastime. Before his departure in the morning, the King invites his reverend host to Court, promises, at least, to requite his hospitality, and expresses himself much pleased with his entertainment. The jolly Hermit at length agrees to venture thither, and to inquire for Jack Fletcher, which is the name assumed by the King. After the Hermit has shown Edward some feats of archery, the joyous pair separate. The King rides home, and rejoins his retinue. As the romance is imperfect, we are not acquainted how the discovery takes place; but it is probably much in the same manner as in other narratives turning on the same subject, where the host, apprehensive of death for having trespassed

on the respect due to his Sovereign, while incognito, is agreeably surprised by receiving honors and reward.

In Mr. Hartshorne's collection, there is a romance on the same foundation, called King Edward and the Shepherd,* which, considered as illustrating manners, is still more curious than the King and the Hermit; but it is foreign to the present purpose. The reader has here the original legend from which the incident in the romance of Ivanhoe is derived; and the identifying the irregular Eremite with the Friar Tuck of Robin Hood's story, was an obvious expedient.

* Like the Hermit, the Shepherd makes havoc amongst the King's game; but by means of a sling, not of a bow; like the Hermit, too, he has his peculiar phrases of computation, the sign and countersign being Passelodion and Berafriend. One can scarce conceive what humor our ancestors found in this species of gibberish; but

"I warrant it proved an excuse for the glass."

No. XV.

A SKETCH OF ABBOTSFORD, THE RESIDENCE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, FROM THE ANNIVERSARY FOR THE YEAR 1829.

[We have much pleasure in presenting to our readers a description of the residence of Sir Walter Scott, from the private letter of a distinguished American. The fame of the illustrious proprietor has flown far and wide; and his name has become a passport to his countrymen in every quarter of the globe where the glory of genius is acknowledged. The admiration which his numerous works have excited, naturally creates a wish to know something more of one who has delighted us all so much—to see the place where he gives himself up to meditation—the walks in which he muses, and the study in which he conceives and pours forth his magical productions. The pen of our friend has recorded his own impressions with great vividness and graphic vigor: to the aid of the pen we have brought the pencil, and rendered more complete the account of the distinguished tourist.—ED.]

I HAVE been exceedingly unfortunate as to one of the chief objects of this northern expedition; in a word, it has been my luck to select for my visit to Scotland, the only month in which, for some years past, Sir Walter has been out of it. My good friend R—— had told me that by the 12th or 13th he was sure to be on the banks of the Tweed; and, amply provided with letters of introduction, I quitted the mail-coach at Selkirk on the 15th, without the slightest doubt that I was within an hour's ride of the great Minstrel, as well as of his castle. The people at the inn, too, confirmed me in my belief. "The Sheriff," so they called him, was, they said, sure to be at home, for "the session was up," and he was never known to linger amidst the dust of Edinburgh when his professional duties permitted him to be in the country. On accordingly I drove, in high hope; and ere long the towers of Abbotsford were pointed out to me amidst a beautiful wood chiefly of young oak and birch, and at no great distance from the river. But to cut the story short, I found the outer gates barred and bolted; there was nothing, after we knocked and rang for some minutes, but a woful howl-

ing of dogs from the interior; and at last a rough-looking countryman issuing, with a stag-hound at his heels and an ax on his shoulder, from a side postern, informed me, in a dialect not over-intelligible, that Sir Walter and his family had gone on a tour to Ireland, and were not expected back again for some weeks. This was grievous enough: but what remedy? I asked to see the house and gardens, and was told I might do so any other day I pleased, but that on this particular day there was a fair in their neighborhood, and the showkeepers had quitted their post to partake of its festivities. Upon a little reflection, I resolved to go on to "fair Melrose," and return to Abbotsford next morning. I was fortunate enough to scrape acquaintance, ere this, with Mr. ***** of *****, who politely offered to act as my cicerone, and I believe, in the absence of the Poet's own household, there was no one better able to perform those functions. I breakfasted with him, and he conducted me once more to the huge baronial gates, which I no longer found reluctant to turn on their hinges. He took me all over the house and its environs, and I spent a delightful evening afterwards under his own hospitable roof, which is on the other side of the Tweed.

Some fifteen or sixteen years ago, he tells me, there was not a more unlovely spot, in this part of the world, than that on which Abbotsford now exhibits all its quaint architecture and beautiful accompaniment of garden and woodland. A mean farm-house stood on part of the site of the present edifice; a "kale-yard" bloomed where the stately embattled court-yard now spreads itself; and for many thousand acres of flourishing plantations, half of which have all the appearance of being twice as old as they really are, there was but a single long straggling stripe of unthriving firs. The river, however, must needs remain *in statu quo;* and I will not believe that any place so near those clearest and sweetest of all waters, could ever have been quite destitute of charms. The scene, however, was no doubt wild enough,—a naked moor—a few little turnip-fields painfully reclaimed from it—a Scotch cottage—a Scotch

farm-yard, and some Scots firs. It is difficult to imagine a more complete contrast to the Abbotsford of 1825."

"Sir W. is, as you have no doubt heard, a most zealous agriculturist, and arboriculturist especially; and he is allowed to have done things with this estate, since it came into his possession, which would have been reckoned wonders, even if they had occupied the whole of a clever and skilful man's attention, during more years than have elapsed since he began to write himself Laird of Abbotsford. He has some excellent arable land on the banks of the Tweed, and towards the little town of Melrose, which lies some three miles from the mansion; but the bulk of the property is hilly country, with deep narrow dells interlacing it. Of this he has planted fully one-half, and it is admitted on all hands, that his rising forest has been laid out, arranged, and managed, with consummate taste, care, and success. So much so, that the general appearance of Tweedside, for some miles, is already quite altered and improved by the graceful ranges of his woodland; and that the produce of these plantations must, in the course of twenty or thirty years more, add immensely to the yearly rental of the estate. In the mean time, the shelter afforded by the woods to the sheep-walks reserved amidst them, has prodigiously improved the pasturage, and half the surface yields already double the rent the whole was ever thought capable of affording, while in the old unprotected condition. All through those woods there are broad riding-ways, kept in capital order, and conducted in such excellent taste, that we might wander for weeks amidst their windings without exhausting the beauties of the Poet's lounge. There are scores of charming waterfalls in the ravines, and near every one of them you find benches or bowers at the most picturesque points of view. There are two or three small mountain lakes included in the domain—one of them not so small neither—being, I should suppose, nearly a mile in circumference; and of these also every advantage has been taken. On the whole, it is already a very beautiful scene; and when the trees

have gained their proper dignity of elevation, it must be a very grand one. Amidst these woods, Mr. ***** tells me, the proprietor, when at home, usually spends many hours daily, either on his pony, or on foot, with ax and pruning-knife in hand. Here is his *study*; he, it seems, like Jaques, is never at a loss to find "books in trees."

> "The Muse nae poet ever fand her
> Till by himsel' he learned to wander
> Adown some trotting burn's meander,
> An' no think lang,"

As Burns says; and one of his *burns*, by the by, is Huntley Burn, where Thomas of Erceldoune met the Queen of Faery. The rencontre, according to the old Rhymer himself, occurred beside "The Eildon Tree." That landmark has long since disappeared, but most of Sir Walter's walks have the Eildon Hills, in some one or other of their innumerable aspects, for background. But I am keeping you too long away from "The Roof-tree of Monkbarns," which is situated on the brink of the last of a series of irregular hills, descending from the elevation of the Eildons, stepwise, to the Tweed. On all sides, except towards the river, the house connects itself with the gardens (according to the old fashion now generally condemned); so that there is no want of air and space about the habitation. The building is such a one, I dare say, as nobody but he would ever have dreamed of erecting; or, if he had, escaped being quizzed for his pains. Yet it is eminently imposing in its general effect; and in most of the details, not only full of historical interest, but of beauty also. It is no doubt a thing of shreds and patches, but they have been combined by a masterly hand; and if there be some whimsicalities, that in an ordinary case might have called up a smile, who is likely now or hereafter to contemplate such a monument of such a man's peculiar tastes and fancies, without feelings of a far different order? Borrowing outlines and ornaments from every part of Scotland, a gateway from Linlithgow, a roof from Roslin, a chimneypiece from Melrose, a postern from the "Heart of

Midlothian," &c. &c. &c. it is totally unlike any other building in the kingdom, as a whole; and that whole is, I have said, a beautiful and a noble whole—almost enough so to make me suspect that, if Sir Walter had been bred an architect, he might have done as much in that way as he has, *de facto*, in the woodman's craft, or (which they swear he is less vain of) the novelist's.

By the principal approach you come very suddenly on the edifice—as the French would say, "Vous *tombez* sur le château;" but this evil, if evil it be, was unavoidable, in consequence of the vicinity of a public road which cuts off the *chateau* and its *plaisance* from the main body of park and wood, making it a matter of necessity, that what is called, in the improvement men's slang, "the avenue proper," should be short. It is but slightly curved, and you find yourself, a very few minutes after turning from the road, at the great gate already mentioned. This is a lofty arch rising out of an embattled wall of considerable height; and the *jougs*, as they are styled, those well-known emblems of feudal authority, hang rusty at the side: this pair being *dit on* relics from that great citadel of the old Douglases, Thrieve Castle, in Galloway. On entering, you find yourself within an inclosure of perhaps half an acre or better, two sides thereof being protected by the high wall above mentioned, all along which, inside, a trellised walk extends itself—broad, cool, and dark overhead with roses and honeysuckles. The third side, to the east, shows a screen of open arches of Gothic stone-work, filled between with a net-work of iron, not visible until you come close to it, and affording therefore delightful glimpses of the gardens, which spread upwards with many architectural ornaments of turret, porch, urn, vase, and what not, after a fashion that would make the heart of old Price of the Picturesque to leap within him: this screen is a feature of equal novelty and grace, and if ever the old school of gardening come into vogue again, will find abundance of imitators. It abuts on the eastern extremity of the house, which runs along the whole of the northern side (and a small part of the western) of the great inclosure.

And, by the way, nothing can be more delightful than the whole effect of the said inclosure, in the still and solitary state in which I chanced to see it. There is room for a piece of the most *elaborate* turf within it, and rosaries of all manner of shapes and sizes gradually connect this green pavement with the roof of the trellis walk, a verdant cloister, over which appears the gray wall with its little turrets; and over that again, climb oak, elm, birch, and hazel, up a steep bank—so steep that the trees, young as they are, give already all the grand effect of a sweeping amphitheatre of wood. The background on that side is wholly forest; on the east, garden loses itself in forest by degrees; on the west, there is wood on wood also, but with glimpses of the Tweed between; and in the distance (some half-a-dozen miles off) a complete *sierra*; the ridge of the mountain between Tweed and Yarrow, to wit—its highest peak being that of Newark hill, at the bottom of which the old castle, where "the latest Minstrel sang," still exhibits some noble ruins.

Not being skilled in the technical tongue of the architects, I beg leave to decline describing the structure of the house, further than merely to say, that it is more than one hundred and fifty feet long in front, as I paced it; was built at two different onsets; has a tall tower at either end, the one not the least like the other; presents sundry *crowfooted*, alias zigzagged gables to the eye; a myriad of indentations and parapets and machicolated eaves; most fantastic waterspouts; labelled windows, not a few of them of painted glass; groups of right Elizabethan chimneys; balconies of divers fashions, greater and lesser; stones carved with heraldries innumerable let in here and there in the wall; and a very noble projecting gateway, a fac-simile, I am told, of that appertaining to a certain dilapidated royal palace, which long ago seems to have caught in a particular manner the poet's fancy, as witness the stanza:

> Of all the palaces so fair,
> Built for the royal dwelling,
> Above the rest, beyond compare,
> Linlithgow is excelling.

The prints will give you a better notion of these matters than my pen could do,—and, by the by, the best likeness I have as yet met with, is one that adorns the cover of a certain species of sticking-plaster. From this porchway, which is spacious and airy, quite open to the elements in front, and adorned with some enormous petrified staghorns overhead, you are admitted by a pair of folding-doors at once into the hall; and an imposing *coup d'œil* the first glimpse of the Poet's interior does present. The lofty windows, only two in number, being wholly covered with coats of arms, the place appears as dark as the twelfth century, on your first entrance from noonday; but the delicious coolness of the atmosphere is luxury enough for a minute or two; and by degrees your eyes get accustomed to the effect of those "storied panes," and you are satisfied that you stand in one of the most picturesque of apartments. The hall is, I should guess, about forty feet long, by twenty in height and breadth. The walls are of richly carved oak, most part of it exceedingly dark; and brought, it seems, from the old palace of Dumfermline: the roof, a series of pointed arches of the same, each beam presenting, in the centre, a shield of arms richly blazoned: of these shields there are sixteen, enough to bear all the quarterings of a perfect pedigree, if the Poet could show them; but on the maternal side (at the extremity) there are two or three blanks (of the same sort which made Louis le Grand unhappy) which have been covered with sketches of Cloudland, and equipped with the appropriate motto, "*Nox alta velat.*" The shields, properly filled up, are distinguished ones; the descent of Scott of Harden on one side, and Rutherford *of that ilk* on the other; all which matters, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of Douglas and Nisbet? There is a doorway at the eastern end, over and around which the Baronet has placed another series of escutcheons, which I looked on with at least as much respect; they are the memorials of his immediate personal connexions, the bearings of his friends and companions. All around the cornice of this noble room, there runs a

continued series of blazoned shields, of another sort still; at the centre of one end, I saw the bloody heart of Douglas; and opposite to that the royal lion of Scotland,—and between the ribs there is an inscription in black-letter, which I, after some trials, read, and of which I wish I had had sense enough to take a copy. To the best of my recollection, the words are not unlike these: "These be the coat armories of the clannis and chief men of name, wha keepit the marchys of Scotlande in the aulde tyme for the Kinge. Trewe ware they in their tyme, and in their defense God them defendyt." There are from thirty to forty shields thus distinguished—Douglas, Soulis, Buccleugh, Maxwell, Johnstoune, Glendoning, Herries, Rutherford, Kerr, Elliott, Pringle, Home, and all the other heroes, as you may guess, of the border minstrelsy. The floor of this hall is black and white marble, from the Hebrides, wrought lozengewise; and the upper walls are completely hung with arms and armor. Two full suits of splendid steel occupy niches at the eastern end by themselves; the one an English suit of Henry the Fifth's time, the other an Italian, not quite so old. The variety of cuirasses, black and white, plain and sculptured, is endless; helmets are in equal profusion; stirrups and spurs of every fantasy, dangle about and below them; and there are swords of every order, from the enormous two-handed weapon with which the Swiss peasants dared to withstand the spears of the Austrian chivalry, to the claymore of the "Forty-five," and the rapier of Dettingen. Indeed, I might come still lower, for among other spoils, I saw Polish lances, gathered by the author of Paul's Letters on the field of Waterloo, and a complete suit of chain mail taken off the corpse of one of Tippoo's body-guard at Seringapatam. A series of German executioners' swords was *inter alia* pointed out to me; on the blade of one of which I made out the arms of Augsburgh, and a legend which may be thus rendered:

> Dust, when I strike, to dust: From sleepless grave,
> Sweet Jesu, stoop, a sin-stained soul to save.

I am sorry there is no catalogue of this curious collection. Sir Walter ought to make one himself, for my cicerone informs me there is some particular history attached to almost every piece in it, and known in detail to nobody but himself. "Stepping westward," as Wordsworth says, from this hall, you find yourself in a narrow, low, arched room, which runs quite across the house, having a blazoned window again at either extremity, and filled all over with smaller pieces of armor and weapons, such as swords, firelocks, spears, arrows, darts, daggers, &c. &c. &c. Here are the pieces, esteemed most precious by reason of their histories respectively. I saw, among the rest, Rob Roy's gun, with his initials, R. M. C. i. e. Robert Macgregor Campbell, round the touch-hole: the blunderbuss of Hofer, a present to Sir Walter from his friend Sir Humphry Davy; a most magnificent sword, as magnificently mounted, the gift of Charles the First to the great Montrose, and having the arms of Prince Henry worked on the hilt; the hunting-bottle of bonnie King Jamie; Buonaparte's pistols (found in his carriage at Waterloo, I believe), *cum multis aliis*. I should have mentioned that staghorns and bulls' horns (the petrified relics of the old mountain monster, I mean), and so forth, are suspended in great abundance above all the doorways of these armories; and that, in one corner, a dark one as it ought to be, there is a complete assortment of the old Scottish instruments of torture, not forgetting the very thumbikens under which Cardinal Carstairs did *not* flinch, and the more terrific iron crown of Wisheart the Martyr, being a sort of barred head-piece, screwed on the victim at the stake, to prevent him from crying aloud in his agony. In short, there can be no doubt that, like Grose of merry memory, the mighty Minstrel

> ——Has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets,
> Rusty airn caps and jinglin' jackets,
> Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets,
> A towmont' guid.

These relics of other, and, for the most part, darker, years, are disposed, however, with so much grace and

elegance, that I doubt if Mr. Hope himself would find any thing to quarrel with in the beautiful apartments which contain them. The smaller of these opens to the drawing-room on one side and the dining-room on the other, and is fitted up with low *divans* rather than sofas; so as to make, I doubt not, a most agreeable sitting-room when the apartments are occupied, as for my sins I found them not. In the hall, when the weather is hot, the Baronet is accustomed to dine; and a gallant refectory no question it must make. A ponderous chandelier of painted glass swings from the roof; and the chimney-piece (the design copied from the stonework of the Abbot's Stall at Melrose) would hold rafters enough for a Christmas fire of the good old times. Were the company suitably attired, a dinner-party here would look like a scene in the Mysteries of Udolpho.

'Beyond the smaller, or rather, I should say, the narrower armory, lies the dining-parlor proper, however; and though there is nothing Udolphoish here, yet I can well believe that, when lighted up and the curtains drawn at night, the place may give no bad notion of the private snuggery of some lofty lord abbot of the time of the Canterbury Tales. The room is a very handsome one, with a low and very richly carved roof of dark oak again; a huge projecting bow-window, and the dais elevated *more majorum;* the ornaments of the roof, niches for lamps, &c. &c. in short, all the minor details, are, I believe, fac-similies after Melrose. The walls are hung in crimson, but almost entirely covered with pictures, of which the most remarkable are—the parliamentary general, Lord Essex, a full length on horseback; the Duke of Monmouth, by Lely; a capital Hogarth, by himself; Prior and Gay, both by Jervas; and the head of Mary Queen of Scots, in a charger, painted by Amias Canrood the day after the decapitation of Fotheringay, and sent some years ago as a present to Sir Walter from a Prussian nobleman, in whose family it had been for more than two centuries. It is a most deathlike performance, and the countenance answers well enough to the coins

of the unfortunate beauty, though not at all to any of the portraits I have happened to see. I believe there is no doubt as to the authenticity of this most curious picture. Among various family pictures, I noticed particularly Sir Walter's great-grandfather, the old cavalier mentioned in one of the epistles in Marmion, who let his beard grow after the execution of Charles the First, and who here appears, accordingly, with a most venerable appendage of silver whiteness, reaching even unto his girdle. This old gentleman's son hangs close by him; and had it not been for the costume, &c. I should have taken it for a likeness of Sir Walter himself. (It is very like the common portraits of the Poet, though certainly not like either Sir Thomas Lawrence's picture or Chantrey's bust.) There is also a very splendid full-length portrait of Lucy Waters, mother to the duke of Monmouth; and an oval, capitally painted, of Anne Duchess of Buccleugh, the same who,

> In pride of youth, in beauty's bloom,
> Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.

'All the furniture of this room is massy Gothic oak'; and, as I said before, when it is fairly lit up, and plate and glass set forth, it must needs have a richly and luxuriously antique aspect. Beyond and alongside are narrowish passages, which make one fancy one's self in the penetralia of some dim old monastery; for roofs and walls and windows (square, round, and oval alike) are sculptured in stone, after the richest relics of Melrose and Roslin Chapel. One of these leads to a charming breakfast-room, which looks to the Tweed on one side, and towards Yarrow and Ettricke, famed in song, on the other: a cheerful room, fitted up with novels, romances, and poetry, I could perceive at one end; and the other walls covered thick and thicker with a most valuable and beautiful collection of water-color drawings, chiefly by Turner, and Thomson of Duddingstone, the designs, in short, for the magnificent work entitled "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland." There is one very grand oil-painting over the chimney-piece,

Fast-castle, by Thomson, alias the Wolf's Crag of the Bride of Lammermoor, one of the most majestic and melancholy sea-pieces I ever saw; and some large black and white drawings of the Vision of Don Roderick, by Sir James Steuart of Allanbank (whose illustrations of Marmion and Mazeppa you have seen or heard of), are at one end of the parlor. The room is crammed with queer cabinets and boxes, and in a niche there is a bust of old Henry Mackenzie, by Joseph of Edinburgh. Returning towards the armory, you have, on one side of a most religious-looking corridor, a small green-house with a fountain playing before it—the very fountain that in days of yore graced the cross of Edinburgh, and used to flow with claret at the coronation of the Stuarts—a pretty design, and a standing monument of the barbarity of modern innovation. From the small armory you pass, as I said before, into the drawing-room, a large, lofty, and splendid *salon*, with antique ebony furniture and crimson silk hangings, cabinets, china, and mirrors—*quantum suff.* and some portraits; among the rest glorious John Dryden, by Sir Peter Lely, with his gray hairs floating about in a most picturesque style, eyes full of wildness, presenting the old Bard, I take it, in one of those "tremulous moods," in which we have it on record he appeared when interrupted in the midst of his Alexander's Feast. From this you pass into the largest of all the apartments, the library, which, I must say, is really a noble room. It is an oblong of some fifty feet by thirty, with a projection in the centre, opposite the fire-place, terminating in a grand bow-window, fitted up with books also, and, in fact, constituting a sort of chapel to the church. The roof is of carved oak again —a very rich pattern—I believe chiefly *à la* Roslin, and the book-cases, which are also of richly carved oak, reach high up the walls all round. The collection amounts, in this room, to some fifteen or twenty thousand volumes, arranged according to their subjects: British history and antiquities filling the whole of the chief wall; English poetry and drama, classics and miscellanies, one end; foreign literature, chiefly

French and German, the other. The cases on the side opposite the fire are wired, and locked, as containing articles very precious and very portable. There are few living authors of whose works presentation copies are not to be found here. My friend showed me inscriptions of that sort in, I believe, every European dialect extant. The books are all in prime condition, and bindings that would satisfy Mr. Dibdin. The only picture is Sir Walter's eldest son, in hussar uniform, and holding his horse, by Allan of Edinburgh, a noble portrait, over the fireplace; and the only bust is that of Shakspeare, from the Avon monument, in a small niche in the centre of the east side. On a rich stand of porphyry, in one corner, reposes a tall silver urn filled with bones from the Piræus, and bearing the inscription, "Given by George Gordon, Lord Byron, to Sir Walter Scott, Bart." It *contained* the letter which accompanied the gift till lately: this has disappeared; no one guesses who took it, but whoever he was, as my guide observed, he must have been a thief for thieving's sake truly, as he durst no more exhibit his autograph than tip himself a bare bodkin. Sad, infamous tourist, indeed! 'Although I saw abundance of comfortable looking desks and arm-chairs, yet this room seemed rather too large and fine for *work*, and I found accordingly, after passing a double pair of doors, that there was a *sanctum* within and beyond this library.'

'The lion's own den proper, then, is a room of about five-and-twenty feet square by twenty feet high, containing of what is properly called furniture nothing but a small writing-table in the centre, a plain arm-chair covered with black leather—a very comfortable one though, for I tried it—and a single chair besides, plain symptoms that this is no place for company. On either side of the fireplace there are shelves filled with duodecimos and books of reference, chiefly, of course, folios; but except these there are no books save the contents of a light gallery which runs round three sides of the room, and is reached by a hanging stair of carved oak in one corner.' You have been both at the Elisée Bourbon and Malmaison, and remember the library at

one or other of those places, I forget which; this gallery is much in the same style. There are only two portraits, an original of the beautiful and melancholy head of Claverhouse, and a small full length of Rob Roy. Various little antique cabinets stand round about, each having a bust on it: Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims are on the mantelpiece; and in one corner I saw a collection of really useful weapons, those of the forest-craft, to wit—axes and bills and so forth of every calibre. There is only one window pierced in a very thick wall, so that the place is rather sombre; the light tracery work of the gallery overhead harmonizes with the books well. It is a very comfortable-looking room, and very unlike any other I ever was in. I should not forget some Highland claymores, clustered round a target over the Canterbury people, nor a writing-box of carved wood, lined with crimson velvet, and furnished with silver plate of right venerable aspect, which looked as if it might have been the implement of old Chaucer himself, but which from the arms on the lid must have belonged to some Italian prince of the days of Leo the Magnificent at the furthest.

'In one corner of this *sanctum* there is a little holy of holies, in the shape of a closet, which looks like the oratory of some dame of old romance, and opens into the gardens; and the tower which furnishes this below, forms above a private staircase accessible from the gallery and leading to the upper regions.'

'The view to the Tweed from all the principal apartments is beautiful. You look out from among bowers, over a lawn of sweet turf, upon the clearest of all streams, fringed with the wildest of birch-woods, and backed with the green hills of Ettricke Forest. The rest you must imagine. Altogether, the place destined to receive so many pilgrimages contains within itself beauties not unworthy of its associations. Few poets ever inhabited such a place; none, ere now, ever created one. It is the realization of dreams: some Frenchman called it, I hear, "a romance in stone and lime."'

THE END.